

# Meet the (dead) Parents

Published by: [Malicia](#) on 17th Aug 2013 | [View all blogs by Malicia](#)  
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**Reserved for:** Malicia, Negaparents

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They often say that 'love' is really just another word for an intimate power struggle: your emotions are at the mercy of another.

Actually, nobody ever said that. Malicia had simply made it up one evening after soaking in one marguerita too many.

It was also on this same night that it had occurred to the villainess that Negaduck knew far more about her than she did him. After the events at Macawber Manor, the devious doppelganger had managed to single-handedly uncover the mysteries surrounding Malicia's demonic lineage and the fate of her mother -- and he wasn't even trying. In fact, she wouldn't put it past him to have more intel than he cared to share, and therefore held something over her: power.

Such a thing would not stand.

Which was why she was currently sitting cross-legged on the floor of her Apothecary, inside the center of a circle made of burning black candles. Beside her was a large paperback book, the title "An Idiot's Guide to Conversing with the Dead" refracted by the soft glow of the candles.

It was here that Malicia began the ritual incantation.

"Hello, paging the Underworld!" The ominous atmosphere instantly smothered under enthusiasm. What? Not everything was like the movies.

"I'm looking for the parents of Negaduck. Come on down, s'il vous plaît!"

That was the nice thing about the afterlife: It could reach through any dimension. The downside: It could reach through any dimension.

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

The underworld, however, was less than enthusiastic.

**"Who dares disturb the spirits of those passed?"** An unnatural wind whipped up, scattering objects and flickering lights. **"Who raises the dead with that accursed name?"**

The dramatic effect ruined by an even louder, New York accented female interrupting out of nowhere.

"Ah there you go again wit' the theatrics! No thought as to whether I'd like to do th' terrorisin' for a change!"

There, floating in the centre of the circle, were not one but two pairs of ghostly eyes. The first in the middle of phasing through surprise to annoyance at their unearthly glare of doom being disrupted; the second would have been rather pretty had they not conveyed perpetual displeasure.

"Oh, and what do we have here?" The latter having taken in and dismissed Malicia with scarcely a passing glance. "A big breasted bimbo. Did you set this up? How typical."

The other set of eyes could only roll in vexation.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

Hooboy. Perhaps this wasn't the best idea she'd had.

"That 'big breasted bimbo' might accidentally slip and tip you into purgatory." Mal replied scathingly. "I hear it's an eternity of crying babies over there. Real fun."

Arms crossed now, she circled around the two deceased beings and continued.

"If you two have appeared, it's because you are linked to Negaduck. So spill."

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

That was a slap across the face with a mackerel. Except they didn't have faces. Or mackerels either, but let's not get picky.

Sighing in resignation, the pair faded into their full ethereal forms.

By that sight, there was no denying the relation. The male was a spitting image of his son, albeit without the mask, and a style that was flashy but in its own way. High quality vintage suit and tie, and plenty of bling.

The woman, who was the opposite end of the classy scale with overdone make-up and a skull-motifed fur stole, reluctantly reined in the overt hostility. For the moment. "What'd you wanna know?"

Where to begin.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Hmmm, choices, choices. Should she start with his real name? Or how he became Negaduck? Or perhaps she could learn more about his relationship with his parents!

"Tell me...did he wet the bed a lot?"

....Or that.

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Oh, all the time!" Gasbagging didn't stop after death, it seemed. "We couldn't get him to stop! Although I'm pretty sure it was intentional."

"The fact he was catapulting the mattresses at the brats across the street should've given that away," interjected the drake, although from his body language he was less than comfortable with being stuck in the middle of a 'girl talk'.

"Yeah." Sage nod, before continuing, "But that all died off when he was old enough to make booby traps using other people's bodily fluids."

"So about 15." Dad joke. Presumably. Unless he meant in weeks.  
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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Mmm-hmm." She was looking NegaPops up and down, taking in his features. Slowly she approached and, for only a moment, ran a hand down the perfectly ironed suit. Which of course resulted in her claws sinking straight through his chest.

"Now I can see where he gets that strong, handsome jaw from." A quick, careless glance in mum's direction to add scathingly. "His fashion sense however..."

"So would I be correct in assuming that he is the reason I'm speaking to you beyond the grave and not at a Negaversian Family Barbecue?"

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Suave points to Pop for not following that up with any meat themed comments, although from the smoothing of his smirk the flattery sat well with him. Completely immaterial as to how it sat with his worse half.

"You got that right. We ran a perfectly respectable-" By Negaversian standards. "'Laundry' business, the cash comin' in from all sides of the continent. But that wasn't good enough for him, was it?"

"Always was a greedy little sod." Ma's turn to grumble. Such affection.

"His ridiculous gambit to turn everything on its head was gonna ruin our operation! So I had words with him."

A ghostly cigar was diverted from its path from jacket to bill as

he used it to jab in Malicia's direction, throwing a question intently back at her. "You ever tried telling that stubborn, selfish snot 'no'?"

Even had she no familiarity with the snot in question, it was entirely self-evident how that father-son chat went down.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"I have tried, yes." Instinctively her hands flew to her rear end, as if simply recalling the memory brought back the familiar stinging pain. "It never ends well... except for him."

Recollecting herself she smiled rather smugly at the two. "Well, perhaps I can at least assist you two in receiving a little... vengeance. Tell me his most humiliating secrets. I'll use it to his disadvantage."

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Which lead to them exchanging a look of surprise.

"No way, we could never do that!" asserted Pa.

"Yeah. He may be a empty-hearted scumbag, but he's still our son!" insisted Ma.

Beat. Then they nearly choked themselves laughing.

Dad was the first to get over his chortling. Just. "Okay, okay..." Snigger. "Didn't he have a crippling fear of dandelions?"

"That's right! Kids used 'ta call him 'Drake the Dandy'. Not to his face, but still..." Pondering, Ma tapped her beak. "I dunno, he was always real bad at controlling his urges. Was what the doctors called a 'humper'. Would go anything, day or night. Table legs, basketballs, loot bags..."

"Now that's not funny." Stern faced Pa. "He broke my favourite leather chair! In the middle of a board meetin'!"

She waved it off. "Oh whatever, one of yer fat floozies woulda broken it anyway!" Back on track, "Obviously that got worse as he got older. Terrible combination, being an utter anti-social loner and all those teen hormones. He had no way of talkin' to girls. The first crush that I know of, Marianne Whifflesnatch, had her face melted off because the chemical mixture he threw together to 'capture her beauty for all time' turned into toxic ooze."

"He was a walking disaster." His father shook his head. "Even when he was trying not to be!"

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

This was perfect. Every crack in the infrastructure revealed by his darling parents. Why hadn't she thought of this before?

"Oh, he's still a humper." Said with a roll of her eyes. Really, it didn't take a medical expert to figure out that Negaduck had some issues with self-control.

...Not that she minded.

By this point, the demonness had procured a long scroll and was scribbling furiously.

"D-R-A-K-E..." Her pen stopped and she looked up at them, an expression of shock and curiosity.

"His name is Drake?!"

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

And the folks stared right back with similar mixed incredulity.

"Of course," said his mother carefully. "You.. didn't know that?"

Pa then took to circling her, but in a pitying rather than predatory manner, put upon like a pro. "I know he's touchy about it—" That was one way to describe assigning immediate execution for its very mention. "But with such a drop-dead gorgeous and obviously like-mindedly malevolent creature like yourself, it's

surprising he hasn't confided in you."

Was it. Was it really.

Echoing the act of empathy, Ma reached out to cover the demoness's hand with her own. Which, if it conveyed anything at all it would be unearthly cold, but it was the thought that counted, right? "Why don't you tell us all about it, honey?"

It was a fishing expedition of course, but Negaparents were sneaky like that.

---

Somewhere, in the middle of a poker game on the other side of town, a chill ran down a certain caped crimelord's spine.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"Him? Confide in anyone?" She threw back her head and cackled loudly.

"Whatever identity he had before he became Negaduck is gone. He doesn't even remove his mask. Ever. Not even when he bathes. I'm pretty sure he's convinced himself it's actually part of his face."

Suspicious of the mother's sudden... interest, she pulled back her hand reflexively.

"I think he'd rather die before he ever speaks of his pre-villain life. Clearly, he's done quite the job of tying up any loose ends..." She motioned at the both of them for added emphasis.

"...But not well enough for a master sorceress like me." She bragged. "And yes, I am quite the prize, aren't I? That's why he allowed our thirteen children to continue breathing -- perfect genetics."

If by 'perfect' you mean 'durable like a cockroach' and difficult to slice in half with a chainsaw.

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Terrifyingly, the next reaction from Mum appeared sincere.

"Children?" Hands clasped in excitement. "Well, where are they?"

Apparently even obnoxious, uncaring Negaparents had an interest in seeing their despicable DNA passed down the generations.

A thought, and she directed a disapproving finger Malicia's way. "You're not practising the Dark Arts without them around, are you?"

Because what sort of terrible parent would neglect their spawn's education in badness like that.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"I'm so glad you asked!" And out came the wallet photos; a long dangling line of them that touched down to the floor.

"Here's my daughters after their first jewelry heist. Naturally, they went straight for the most expensive necklaces. Impeccable taste, just like their mother." She was bursting with pride as she showed off the scene of a burning building and the numerous mini-Mals covered in shiny objects and striking various sassy poses.

"Here's my oldest boy, Jr after he burnt down the orphanage. I can see now he gets his eyes from his grandfather!"

"And here they are bonding with their father." A photograph of the demonlings latched onto every part of Negaduck's body, sinking their teeth in his flesh while 'proud papa' was flailing wildly, mouth open in what was likely a very painful scream.

On the photos went, with all of the demonlings in various states of chaotic rampage: stealing cattle and miniature designer dogs, gnawing holes through the police department until the entire building looked like swiss cheese, and even dancing among the flaming wreckage of the annual St. Canard Spring Season Parade.

She sighed contentedly. "Truly my pride and joy."

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Such a normal sight, family sharing memories like that. Despite the destructive subject matter. Despite the dead audience.

"Awww," cooed Ma. "Look at that. What good strong teeth they have to get through all those reinforced walls!"

"Better than your casserole," Pa chortled, which earned him a smack upside the head. Nope, no similarities there.

A few more moments of enjoying the snaps, before the female's gaze crept back to Malicia.

"So... thirteen little ones, hey? And.. how long have you known our boy?"

Hard to know what she was angling at there, but no doubt some mental arithmetic and more prying was involved.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"I've tolerated his existence for a few years now." Walking straight into the Parent Trap.

"So, did he become Lord of your Negaverse before or after he killed you? Did he inherit his dirty little kingdom from you, like some sort of monarchy?"

She was rubbing her hands together greedily now. How nice it would be to crown herself the Queen of the Negaverse. Perhaps they even kept a hidden stash of treasure somewhere in the city.

"Just curious~" She purred, eyelashes fluttering.

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

But that dream would be brought down faster than the Hindenburg.

"Lord of the..?!" Pa damn near choked a second time, but not on laughter. "Now see here, if he's gone and declared himself Grand Poobah of the entire world, it's got nuthin' to do with us!"

Ma clutched at her no doubt undersized heart dramatically. "The damage it's done to our bad name, him runnin' around like a.. a.. like a costumed clown!"

"Even worse that it's just a front for that duplicitous, old bast---"

Cut off by a sharp, silencing elbow to the gut, Negapop turned to meet the glare of his not-face-melting-at-all accomplice.

"What? What do we care?! We're **dead!**"

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"Oh?" Too late. The floodgates had opened. And the only thing more relentless than a flash flood was a curious demon.

But pushing the subject directly would likely get Ma and Pa here to clam up even further. So, what better way to spill a secret than through an emotional outburst, yes?

"Your son goes by the title Lord Negaduck in your universe. He is treated as a king; their ruler. What's funny is that he spends more time here than he does over there." She smirked.

"I suspect it's the lack of challenge. In the Negaverse, he has plundered and pilfered every bank, treasury, and candy store the world over. There is nothing left. I suppose that would include whatever... legacy, you two had." She frowned.

"A pity, really. It sounds like your family had such potential... and for your grandchildren to never learn of you? To carry on your name?" She tsked.

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

The floodgates of emotion, by contrast, did not immediately burst open. But the otherworldly pair did appear appropriately crestfallen. Pa, to be accurate, appeared more frustrated and angry than despondent; it was entirely possible he didn't 'do' a wider range of feeling than that. No similarities there either...

Gathering her stole tighter around her chest, Ma cast her gaze up at Malicia forlornly. "Yeah, but what can we do about that now?"

As if to say, refer to the earlier 'we're dead' comment.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Well I'm sure I could help!" She began valiantly.

"Why don't you tell me all about your... ah, business, and then I can pass the tales on to my children? I'll tell them all about their amazing grandparents. Perhaps one of them will carry on your good name?"

A pause. "And perhaps if you tell me about this 'front'... that would certainly be useful information to help you."

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Why, that's so sweet!" chimed NegaDad, turning to his less than sweet partner. "Isn't that sweet, evilbun? This gorgeous gal is going to help us through no interest to herself!"

If that sounded suspicious, in their keenness for reprisal they hadn't picked up on it. Apparently...

Waving an arm to encourage Malicia further into the circle, he whispered secretively, "Alright, we'll tell you the truth about how things run over there. But you can't tell anyone, you understand?"

A glance around, as if anything could hurt him anyway, before Pop continued. "Drake can parade about like he runs the whole

rotten place, but the real power is held... by fish."

Strange as that sounded, Ma picked up the tale, "Well not by the fish themselves, but by the person who holds them! You see, food is so poor there—"

Pa nodded. "With all da pollution, and land destroyed, you can't farm anything!"

"Right, so whoever controls the fish stocks, controls everything. And that is why the old man who runs the docks, Mr Mahi, will always be the biggest bigwig in town."

Tapping his beak, Pa turned this over in his head. "Such a shame nobody could ever pull in a bigger haul than him..."

Before they could ponder this further, however, the slam of an outside door signalled an imminent interruption.

"**Mal**," barked a voice familiar to the lot of them. "Where the hell are you?! The Old Haunt is running bloody caesars by the gallon and somehow they haven't been drunk out yet!"

Clearly something was up.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

The deadpan look she gave both of them could have sunk a ship or two.

"Fish." She said. "You are telling me that slimy, scaly stinky creatures are the key to controlling the wealth of the Negaverse."

But before she could further indulge the two, Negaduck's voice cut through the walls and instantaneously the demonness' eyes were as wide as dinner plates.

"Oh crap!"

For a moment she merely glanced around in confusion, panicking. This was bad. Very bad.

"You two need to hide. **Now.**" She hissed at the ghosts. Like a chicken with its head cut off, she circled the room ripping open cupboards and trunks, trying to find a blanket or something to hide them under.

A pause, and then she smacked her forehead. "What am I thinking...? You're ghosts! Just... turn invisible!" She waved them away.

"Just... go through the wall over there, or something. Anything!"

Then to Negaduck she shouted, albeit too sweetly. "Just a minuuuute~"

Deciding it would be doubly safe to prevent him from even seeing the current state of the Apothecary, she made for the exit; making sure to shut the door tightly behind her. Followed by a mad dash to hopefully meet him halfway, before he figured out just where she had been.

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

Of course, in his unnerving habit of appearing where he wasn't expected, Negaduck cut her wild dash short by standing there right outside the door.

Arms folded, fingers drumming impatiently on one yellow clad bicep, scowl a picture of utmost suspicion.

"And just what do you think you're doing?"

Unbeknownst to the criminal, meanwhile, that two supernatural spies were watching through the wall.

"Wouldcha look at that cape?" Ma hissed. "Dat's three sizes too big--"

"Shhhh!" hushed her companion, far more focused on listening in to the conversation than fashion.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"Working on a new spell that will hopefully age Morgana by a couple hundred years." She said without missing a beat. Panicked as she might be, Malicia knew how to fabricate a story when she needed one.

"Why? Did you miss me?" She smirked wryly, stepping forward in the hope that he would instinctively back away, and therefore move further way from the door.

"I'm taking a break from my work anyway, so let's finish our little chat in the kitchen. I have leftover roast bunny in the fridge."

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

"Ah, repeating that sensational trick I once foiled Darkwing Dunce by, brilliant." Taking a step back as predicted, but his attention was still firmly on the door. What was she doing in there?

Thoughts interrupted by a sudden realisation.

"Is it.. unusually cold in here?" That was saying something; even running around without pants he didn't normally pay much attention to temperature. "That's not like you..."

Eyes narrowed. "Normally you're sending the paint peeling by being merely in the vicinity! And that's before you've found out that I traded the entirety of that last jewel haul in for a new fauna shredding motorcycle fender!"

Surely a figure of speech, that?

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"You did **WHAT?**"

In she went for a classic neck-grab. "Those were my jewels too. You think you can just do whatever you want, without any consequences don't you?! What do you need another stupid motorcycle part for anyway, it's not like the damned thing is

going to last long! And maybe if you actually started running from the cops again you wouldn't be in your current state!"

She prodded his belly for emphasis. "You're beginning to look like I did when I was starting my second trimester with the kids!"

Crossing her arms she added, "And for your information, I'm feeling a little under the weather, so my flame is running low. This area of the warehouse is closer to the meat locker, so it's a bit colder. There is certainly nothing remotely suspicious or potentially supernatural about that."

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

"Whatever version of the plague you have must be affecting your eyesight; I've got firmer abs than a Belgian Blue bull." Humph. Jacket straightened. Not that he was trying to hide this supposed paunch, no way.

"Like you can talk, anyway. You trying to flee on foot would turn into Temple of Doom faster than you can say 'Rolling Death Ball'."

If he kept going like this, he'd probably end up in that meat locker. And not in a euphemistic way. Perhaps.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"I'll show YOU death ball you little--!" Deep breaths. She recollected herself, narrowing her eyes.

Snapping her fingers she chanted "Taraxacum pluvia!"

And suddenly it began to rain..... dandelions?

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

"What..." Realisation morphed very quickly into pure. terror.

Scrambling over himself, the mighty and fearsome Negaduck..

fled. Cape pulled over his head for protection.

**"OH-GOD-OH-GOD-OH-GOD-OH-GOD!!"**

Eventually tumbling around a corner to find somewhere to shelter from the blooms of doom.

Floating next to Malicia, his parents watched on with that combination of embarrassment, disappointment and resignation that only parents could manage. Pa notably was less than sympathetic. "That never stops being gratifying."

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Mmm... no kidding." Malicia cracked her knuckles. "Thanks for that little tip. I'm going to enjoy using it."

Feeling rather confident that Negaduck would not dare cross the dandelion-coated threshold, she turned and disappeared back inside her Apothecary. The sound of clicking and sliding and whirring indicated that the door was locked and sealed tight behind her.

Because surely that wouldn't rouse any suspicion whatsoever.

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

But Negaduck had other things on his mind. Namely hiding under a blood-splattered work bench, shaking uncontrollably.

"Revoltin'.. fluffy.." Jabbering broken by neurotic checking for any seedlings that may have stuck on his clothes. "ERGH!" Brush, brush, get them off! "What.. How..."

Which when he realised his fedora was covered with them.

"WHHHHHYYYYYYY...!!!"

In the hallway, his parents took in this sight with little concern.

"Young hate," his mother eventually sighed. "How horrible they

are together. And just think..."

"Shuddap," growled under Pa's non-living breath. "You wanna ruin the plan...?"

One last look at their son, who had either stuck his finger in a socket or was having a fit, and they dissolved back through the wall into the Apothecary.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Once the door was secured behind her, Malicia wiped the proverbial dust from her hands and ran her fingers through her hair.

"Okay, now that I've dealt with that minor distraction, let us return to business." She settled herself in the center of the candlelit circle, her pen armed and ready to take notes.

"You were telling me about the fish." Glancing at the last few things she'd written.

But she wasn't very far in before her face twisted into a smirk and she snorted back laughter.

"Hee...hee... I'm sorry. Just thinking about that look on his face when the dandelions landed on the end of his bill. He was like a werewolf that wandered into a zombie flea den."

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Despite the obvious hilarity, Pa was not amused.

"You gonna take this seriously or what?" Stern faced tilt of the head. "Because I'm sure there are plenty of other broads would love to hear our secrets..."

Like they had anything better to do anyway, hanging around in the underworld, with all that rotting and suffering. As fun as that was to watch.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Yes, yes. Of course." Clearing her throat, she straightened up and gave them her full attention.

"So... about your business. Were you a crime family? Did you have connections? Lackeys? I can tell just by looking at you both that you obviously lived quite comfortably. Were you involved in the fishery business as well?"

Perhaps that's how Negs developed a strange affinity for the smell of rotting fish...

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Ma gave a wide shrug. "Anybody who was important was! But we were just on the periphery, see? It was a hard business to break into."

"No matter how many necks you broke," Pa agreed. "Supply lines were tight. Not helped at all by the Coast Guard..."

Ma gasped at the very mention. "Oh those guys were simply awful! Corrupt and as cruel as they came... Even if you managed to get past the Navy, you risked your whole day's work being captured by those greedy grabbers."

Pa let out a sigh. "If only we had been able to bring in hauls some other way. We would've had it all!"

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Well this universe has an abundance of fish. In fact, we have an abundance of everything." She snapped her fingers and jumped up excitedly.

"Of course! Why didn't I think of this before? Cross-dimensional trade! And not just fish; everything they need. Think of the advantage I would have! I could expand my weaponry business

tenfold by selling and trading with customers in the Negaverse!"

She was visibly excited now, pacing back and forth, her long scroll of notes fluttering behind her. The interference by the Enforcers had crippled her business and Mal was still struggling to get everything back on track. Now, she had been presented with an enticing opportunity -- one outside of Enforcer jurisdiction no less.

"I need to develop trade routes... I know the location of one portal but not the rest. But I could use magic to open and control several portals if need be... yes!"

Turning to regard Ma and Pa, her tail swishing back and forth. "It sounds like you two made quite the team. Were you just business partners or... more?"

The heavy implication being that in Mal's mind, 'business partners' normally sleep with each other and produce offspring.

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

Ma laughed; not entirely a pleasant sound, but it was light and well-meaning. For the moment. "Oh honey, we weren't just partners! We took a solemn vow binding us together for life!"

Before Malicia could get any horrible ideas, she finished breathlessly, "We were.. abettors."

Pa was less concerned with 'romantic' terminology and more caught up with her proposal of a different kind. "You mean you could smuggle in goods from dis world? Bypassing the Coast Guard? Even.. Mr Mahi?"

He gawked, openly. "Why that'd mean... you'd rule the Negaverse!"

For reals, apparently.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"Whoa whoa, slow down. Let's not go that far." Raising her hands defensively, she gritted her teeth like she was coming to a full halt.

"I may be ambitious but I'm not stupid." That clearly remains to be seen.

"Stealing the Negaverse from straight under your son's feet would be a death sentence! You should have seen his reaction when I accidentally bumped him off the Public Enemy List." Again, her hand flew to her rear instinctively.

"Let's just start small, shall we? I'll stick to this 'unknown powerful influence' that Negaduck seems blissfully unaware about. I want this gorgeous face of mine to remain gorgeous, after all."

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

That didn't really seem to surprise Pa.

"Of course, sweetheart." Rolling his eyes to explain, "Nobody is that stupid, settin' off one of his inevitable temper tantrums like that. You want to control the place, not destroy it!"

That job was already taken.

"Look, all I'm saying is that you could hold the real power there." Hovering down to her side. "With you secretly pulling the strings, our dynasty could go from being a show to a success. That's the same as what you're thinking, right?"

Adding, through a wicked purr, "Devious minds plot alike. And really, you are far too beautifully devious for him..."

Shamelessly flirting from beyond the grave. Yup, definitely a Negaduck forebear.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Hmm... I suppose that would be fine. After all, it wouldn't harm

his reputation, which he values above all else. And if anything, by having me pull the strings it would be a full advantage to him since he benefits from my resources already anyway."

Turning to face Pa (and as a result, nearly putting her face inside of his ghostly apparition) she nodded confidently.

"This will be good for him too. Even if he doesn't know it's happening!"

\*\*\*

And so she gathered up her supplies and began her plan to set course for the Negaverse. Naturally, she waited until Negaduck was nowhere in the vicinity (and used the power of DANDELIONS to hopefully keep him away). This was pretty easy, considering that the malicious mallard was usually busy engaging in his own illegal shenanigans and didn't pay her much heed in the process.

As for Ma and Pa, a simple transference spell allowed their spirits to be absorbed by a diamond Mal kept on hand. A simple trick for allowing the apparitions to travel freely in the mortal realm without getting dragged down by the chains of the undead realm.

Finally she arrived at the portal Negaduck had revealed to her once before, hidden beneath the towering Audobon Bay Bridge. With her was a seemingly innocuous brief case. Of course, nothing the demonness owned was ever that simple. Inside was a basic dimensional pocket where cans upon cans of fish could be found, along with some other goodies that, based on Ma and Pa's advice, would be excellent for business.

"All right then. I'm ready. Let's hope the location you're sending me to is still the same. You've both been gone for some time, after all."

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by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Don't worry about it," Pa waved it off. "We know the city like the back of a stinking alley!"

Pause. "Which, now I think about it, makes up most of where we're going..."

Impatient, Ma let out a groan of exasperation and pushed him through the portal, and away they went.

\*\*\*

As promised, they had little problems finding their way to the docks. Aside from the overall level of destruction – a few bridges burnt down here, a collapsed hospital there – it was generally as the pair expected.

It was only when the three of them drew near to the end of the rickety jetty did Pa urge a halt.

"There he is." Pointing to an elderly canine fellow sitting cross legged behind what appeared to be an ordinary fish stall, with what was presumably his family or younger workers bustling around. "Mr Mahi."

As Malicia took that in, he urged in hushed tones, "Now if you're gonna pull a take-over, you'll need to follow our instructions. I don't know how you do things in your universe but there's a process for this."

Strangely, there wasn't really a Normalverse equivalent of a criminal fish trafficking coup. Not that Malicia would have readily encountered, anyway.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"But... he just looks like a weak, aging Normal. I could simply burn his stand to the ground and him with it!"

A considerate pause. "Then again, that would defeat this whole being 'subtle' and 'behind the scenes' thing."

For a few moments, Malicia took some time to scan her surroundings, her opposition, and the overall scene. It... wasn't what she was expecting from the supposed 'power behind the throne' of the Negaverse. In fact, Mr. Mahi looked neither

powerful or rich.

Then again, she knew little of the Negaverse and its inhabitants. Which was why she leaned heavily on Ma and Pa for guidance.

"Alright then, just walk me through this." She told the two.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Okay, well it's quite simple. You know those cans you've stuffed into your witchcase there? Just open 'em up and..."

Whisper whisper whisper.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Deadpan stare.

"You can't be serious. You are, aren't you?"

Then again, it wasn't too far off from the Ghoul's Day Festival ritual involving catgut and monkey spines.

.....And that was how it came to be, that Mr. Mahi found himself eclipsed by a large imposing figure with fish strapped to every inch of its body. Standing tall, chest puffed out, Malicia tried to appear as threatening as possible.

Truly, Negaversians were an interesting bunch, she thought.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Without a word, Mr Hahi looked up beneath his white and bushy eyebrows to stare at this strange and stinky newcomer. The rest of his brood fell silent to stare also.

"Wait for it..." murmured Ma sideways to her co-conspirator.

Badness was about to go down, but not in the way Malicia

expected.

\*\*\*

That unexpected badness had come to a stop at the end of the pier. Checking a patented Von Drake Handheld Beepy Screen Thing (tm), Negaduck scowled. The device served him well as an alert to unauthorised portal hopping, but its detection of where the out-of-place energy had dispersed was.. not exactly precise.

"Blast it! How am I ever going to spot the monumental idiot..."

The words 'who gatecrashed' died in his throat as he spied said idiot. Really, a mackerel-covered Malicia was a little hard to miss.

But rather than anger, his expression had snapped to something else entirely.

\*\*\*

Back at the fish stall...

"Any second now..." muttered Pa.

Then, a flurry of footsteps.

A black-and-red blur.

And Malicia was chased – if not successfully tackled – by one crazed caped criminal who seemed to be responding to her freakish display with.. was that outright infatuation?

Honestly, the scene with the dreaded dandelions was tame in comparison.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

Continuing to stand stock-still, Malicia was slowly growing impatient at the lack of response from Mr. Mahi.

"Why isn't he doing anything?" She hissed through her teeth at the apparitions next to her. "Because I'm beginning to wonder

if-- **GYAHAH?!**"

The full force of the Negalibido slammed into her, knocking her straight off her feet. Dazed from the collision, it took a moment to realize that the groping, growling, snarling creature on top of her was someone familiar.

**"You!"** She screeched. "What are you doing here an... GET OFF OF ME? WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Papi," said one of the fishmonger's children through transfixed horror. "It's happening again."

Mr Mahi could only sagely nod.

At least there wasn't any humping. Not yet, anyway.

"Mffph.." Negaduck seemed torn between smothering her in kisses, or smothering his face with the wet, salty fish. "Please..." Well, that was a rare utterance. "I must have you!" Half licking, half gnawing her putrid coverings like ynnphgmmnphng. "Stay with me forever!"

The Negaparents responsible for instigating this mess, meanwhile, shielded their eyes. Yes, it was disgusting enough to unnerve even them.

"Argh, did we have to do it this way?" complained his mother.

Pa gritted through clenched teeth, "It's for his own badness! Kid's such a freak; how ELSE was he ever going to end up with a half-indecent collaborator?"

Even noting this potential collaborator was foolish enough to cover herself with kippers without question.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Horror could not even begin to describe Malicia's reaction. She

couldn't decide which was more terrifying: Negaduck's mysterious and unexplained fish fetish, or the romantic overtures that came with it.

Surely... there had to be an explanation, right? Perhaps he was snooping around in her Apothecary and inhaled a leftover love potion. Or maybe someone got a hold of that mind control device again. Perhaps a small alien had burrowed itself into his skull, melting his brain, even.

"Would you... get off!" She flailed her arms, trying to slap him away. "What's gotten into you?!"

With no other choice she began to peel away the layers of fish, allowing them to drop to her feet like a very smelly, discarded piece of lingerie. Unfortunately, even while she was visibly fish free, the oil was slathered all over her feathers and hair. It would likely be weeks before she'd get rid of the odor.

Turning now to glare daggers at the onlooking parents, she realized things were going exactly as they planned.

"What is this?!" She hissed at them. "Explain yourselves!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Given a slap from Malicia was a little like being sideswiped by a bus, Negaperv ended up implanting into the side of a wooden shack. Peeling off after a moment, he landed on his back... but made a happy little sound when the discarded fish pile ended up on him.

Until the seagulls had at it.

"ARGH! OW! YOU WRETCHED--! MINE! MIIINE!!"

His parents, collectively, facepalmed. Seemed like anyone who had some part in raising Negaduck must have been doing that near constantly.

"Come on, honey-" eventually snapped Ma. "You got thirteen hellspawn together, and he obviously loathes you, yet you've

never formed an official duo?"

"Mr Commitment here ain't getting any younger," said Pa, thumbing in the direction of his son who appeared to be trying to punch a seabird in the beak. "But we know the numbskull would never ask you himself if left to his own devices. We couldn't risk him missin' out on a lifetime of misery! So.. we mighta set you up."

By this stage, Negaduck had given up on salvaging the scraps. But that delightfully horrid odour was still coming from somewhere.. And not just anywhere, but a seductive somewhere.

Oh, eye hearts. How wretched.

Besotted beyond belief, he made to wrap his arms around her waist, murmuring amorous nothings and drinking in 'her' scent. The effect was not as extreme as it had been when she was liberally coated with fish, but obviously the rancid leftovers were still clouding his mind. Good Hades, it was worse than how he behaved with Betsy.

His mother gave a scornful snort, but not at Negaduck – at the woman he was nuzzling lovestruck against. "You didn't think we'd just TELL you the key to his power here, did you?"

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"D....duo?!" Shaking her head in confusion and disbelief. What were these two whack-jobs talking about?

Her gaze shifted back down to Negaduck. She held it momentarily on him, listening to his lustful proposals and mutterings of admiration.

It was... it was awful. Quite possibly the most terrifying experience of Malicia's life -- and that was saying something, given the past few months involved sand worms, her psycho father, sludge sex fests, clone orgies, and alternate universe relationships with former nerdy crushes.

But this? This was just a whole new level that made the skin

beneath her feathers crawl.

The only way she could possibly respond to Negaduck's affectations was with one, wide-eyed exclamation:

"Your parents are **crazy**."

Welp, looks like the cat's outta the bag. Or the... fish out of the bowl?

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

He could only gaze half-lidded up at her with unhinged adoration.

"Can I make a nest out of your hair?"

Yes, his parents were the ones who were mad.

In the background, Mr Hahi and family were discreetly shutting up shop and creeping away. No good could come of such a scene.

Particularly not when Negaduck was known not to go easy on witnesses.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"No! No you may not!" Grabbing him by the shoulders, she shook him wildly. "Snap out of it!"

Turning to glower at the Negaparents, she jabbed a finger at them. "You two! This isn't over! After I take care of this idiot, we're going to have a little chat."

And without any more argument, Malicia grabbed the lovestruck mallard and pulled him inside the brief case -- the only spot where they could have a little privacy. It was left sitting abandoned at the docks where, hopefully, nobody would dare venture near.

Inside the dimensional pocket, Mal was stripping off her stinky clothes. She crooked a finger at her partner. "Alright, get over here, dummy. Maybe we can drain this sappiness out of your system with some good old fashioned bad behaviour."

[Delete](#)



by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

Getting the lovin' out of his head with a little love-in? He wasn't one to argue. Not in his current state.

So like a man possessed, he was drawn into his Fishy Queen. Love potions, eat your heart out. Maybe literally.

From the outside, of course, all one could see was the suitcase. Which suddenly began to jump and jitter around the jetty, seemingly of its own accord, like it was having a fight with itself. And what a 'fight' it was.

Scarce seconds later – surely a illusion of cartoon physics, no way could have it been mere seconds – the convulsing stopped, and out from the case jumped one Negaduck, looking no longer hypnotised and very unhappy.

"Alright," he roared, ready to just about rip the deck apart with his bare hands. **"What the hell is going on here?!"**

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

Phew. The chaotic balance has been restored.

"Weeell..." She twiddled her claws for a moment, before bursting into explanation.

"The spirits of your parents seem to have mystically appeared, and possessed me! One minute I'm at home, minding my own business. The next, I'm here, covered in fish." She frowned.

What? Nobody said it had to be the actual explanation.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"My what?!"

Furious confusion did not abate at all as the two parents in question faded back into sight in front of them. Hitching a ride back to the underworld wasn't as easy as they had hoped while still anchored to the living plane.

"What a load of hogwash," scowled Ma.

"She was the one who summoned us in the first place, to get the dirt on you!" burst out Pa, fed up. "So we mighta mucked you both around, so what? That was nuthin' compared to what you did to us!"

Negaduck didn't even bother with that. Once the initial shock wore off, he spun around to direct his glare at the fishy storyteller.

Actual explanation. Now.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"What, you're not going to believe them over moi, are you?"

No, but perhaps the fact she was grasping at her tail and knotting it -- a classic tell for Mal when she was lying -- might be a dead giveaway.

"In any case, it's not all that important how they got here." She continued conversationally as she sloooowly began to back away.

"So I'll just leave you three to your reunion so you can have some quality parent-son time."

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Funnily enough, he was more interested in knotting Malicia's neck than family bonding fun.

"So you just happened on that delightful spell earlier, did you?"  
Couldn't even bring himself to say the 'D' word, but he was clearly not buying her story at all.

Continuing to advance, his voice dropped to a low, murderous rumble,

"What else did you find out?"

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

She edged back further down the dock. Soon, the pier would end at the sludgy, dark, Audubon bay waters and Malicia would have nowhere to run.

"Nothing I didn't already know." She bit her lower lip nervously. Perhaps creepy lovestruck Negaduck wasn't so bad after all.

"You killed your parents. But I didn't need them to tell me that -- I wouldn't expect anything less from you." The last part uttered through half-lidded eyes. Because nothing says 'self preservation' like appealing to the ego.

"You're a chronic humper. Again, old news." Making sure to add on, "A more than welcome habit."

Finally she averted her eyes. "And they... may have mentioned a certain weed-related phobia of yours."

No mention of the other D-related word she learned, however.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Hey!" he barked. "It's not a phobia. Phobias are dependent on fear. I'm not scared of the bloody things!"

Humph.

"I just don't want fairy eggs infecting my brain and turning me nice." That superbly irrational explanation turned into superbly

intense questioning of his cohort, "Do you want that, Mal? HUH?!"

My, what a piece of misinformation he had there. And any question as to whether it had come from was potentially answered by the spectral father behind him who was struggling to suppress a snigger.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

For a moment, Malicia had opened her mouth to inform Negaduck that fairies did not lay eggs -- they reproduced through glitterdust. But then, why take away this amazing opportunity to hold this weapon of mass destruction over his head?

"No, I certainly would not want that." She conceded. "Then I would be forced to put you out of your misery."

But now she was disappointed. Obviously his parents had no plans of revealing this 'secret power' of the Negaverse... if there ever was one.

"So." She began slowly, trying to segue her way into the subject. "Why didn't you follow your parents' legacy anyway? It sounds like they were running a fairly decent racket in their time and were profiting quite nicely."

Then, she beckoned to the two floating spirits in question.

"Also... what is meant by an 'Official Duo'?"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Oh those words. Which he clearly hadn't heard in what could loosely be termed romantic mode. They froze him faster than one of Morgana's ice attacks.

Time for the Negaparents to cop the 'please explain' glare.

"You told her about that?!" hissed vehemently, as if somehow hoping Malicia wouldn't catch the conversation. "There's no

concept like that where she's from! She could've remained ignorant and oblivious otherwise!"

"What?" scoffed Pa. "And let you miss out on all this torture? Hah!"

The failure of any straight answers to be forthcoming probably was a kind of torture though.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Glancing back and forth, gauging Negaduck's reaction, she began to put the pieces together.

"Are you talking about... some sort of equivalent to marriage?"

Horrifying a concept as that was, she couldn't help but feel a strange amusement at Negaduck's utter avoidance of the subject. Oh, how fun it would be to make him squirm a little bit more.

"Do go on." Said to Ma and Pa with a wry smirk. "Tell me all about the traditional ritual that is done to become an Official Duo."

Casting a sadistic sideward glance at Negaduck. "I'm very interested."

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Horrifyingly, Ma was more than happy to oblige.

"Oh it's just lovely!" she enthused, before counting off on her fingers. "First you need to be aligned on the Three Blighted Principles of Ruination, namely shared hatred, complimentary method, and targeted treachery. Then all you need is four lengths of chain, a goat, and—"

"The lady doesn't want to hear about that!" A groan from Pa, who had little tolerance for long winded explanations. "Essentially it runs on MAD – mutual assured destruction. You want to work with this person, but if they're as vile and black-hearted as you, how you gonna trust 'em? Well you give them the ability to

destroy you, and you them, simultaneously. So you don't have to waste time protecting yourself from backstabbin', because your partner won't cross that line out of their own selfish desire to avoid ka-blamo."

"I'LL KA-BLAMO YOU IN A SECOND!" erupted Negaduck, who had well and truly had enough by this point. Strangely though he wasn't able to follow through on that threat, or even throttle them a little. Much to his parents mirth as his charge sailed straight through them and had him fall – nearly – straight off the edge of the pier and into the festering water below.

Definitely one of the advantages to being dead.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

But Malicia was stroking her chin thoughtfully.

"That sounds far better than marriage. It's practical, useful, and benefits both parties."

Shooting Negaduck a sly smile. "But I can understand if you're not interested. I can always find some other big, bad, brute to become my abettor half."

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"There's nobody bigger, badder or brutier than me, and you know it!" Negaduck snarled, stomping back over. "Which is exactly why I don't need any of this 'Duo' rubbish! I'm running everything just fine on my own."

"Oh really?" drawled Ma, reflecting the utmost cynicism from both folks.

Parents. Undermining the sufficiency of fully grown supervillains even after death.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"On your own?!" Burst Mal. "Really!"

Bending down so that she was face-to-face with the Lord of the Negaverse she began a tirade. "Last I checked you've spent the last four years under MY roof, using MY resources whenever you see fit --without PAYING, mind you-- as well as borrowing my magic talent! You eat MY food, drink MY liquor, and use MY half of the stash to add stupid parts to your stupid motorcycle!"

One clawed hand flew out to poke the end of his bill. "I've done NOTHING but benefit you with my resources."

Naturally, there was no mention of the vast number of times she had completely destroyed or foiled one of his evil plans out of sheer spite or ignorance.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Then would have probably been a good time to express his appreciation for that, in whatever manner he could. Not that as a master of evil he was in the habit of thanking anybody, but a little effort to worm himself back onto her good – or less bad – side would certainly be worth the trade off, and would probably take the heat off this Duumvirate business. Surely his cunning mind would see the logic of that, and resist getting caught in a blowup.

Negaduck? Hah.

"Listen, sweetcheeks, if you want to do all that to enjoy the privilege of being around my infamous greatness, that's fine by me!" he roared right back. "But don't think for a second that I couldn't do just as well without your huge arse squashing all my schemes!"

Well if she didn't mention it, he would.

"I'm my own villain." Proud and stubborn as always. "And I'm never tying myself to the success of another!"

Temporary alliances to his advantage were one thing. But a permanent partnership? That put them on – gasp – equal terms?

Hell no.

Concluding his own outburst with a thundered, "If you can't deal with that, feel free to show yourself out of MY universe!"

And off he stomped back along the pier. The effect lessened somewhat by the 'walking through a spider web' fit he through when passing through his parents unexpectedly, but can't say he didn't try.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"AND I CAN DO JUST FINE ON MY OWN TOO! OR ARE YOU FORGETTING WHO STOLE YOUR PUBLIC ENEMY ONE TITLE?" Yeah, she was going there.

Turning to fume at his parents, "I ought to steal this damn universe from him too!" She paced back and forth, ranting.

"I'll show him that I can do even better without him around!" Really... not what his parents had been aiming for. Quite the opposite, in fact.

"Now you two." She picked up the diamond. "You're going to spill the truth about the real secret to power around here, or I'll see fit that you'll spend the rest of your undead lives stuck inside your son's sweaty boxers!"

A thoughtful pause.

"Also, tell me the story of how he lost his virginity. I need a good laugh right now."

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"How do you suppose we know dat?" His mother cringed. "Or that we'd even want to?"

While the older drake was similarly put off, it did not put off his sense of humour. "Although I'm sure if you put in a call to the underworld again, you'd find out. If not considering his violent

tendencies, then the fact he had a penchant for the older ladies..."

A sly taunting smile at his mate, adding, "Not that I can say I blame him..."

"**Hey!**" Ma did not take kindly to the implication, and lunged for him. "Why I oughta...!"

Cackling, he dodged, and round and round they went.

No surprises as to why those on high decided being linked together for all eternity would be classed as a fitting punishment.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"He... he does NOT like older women!" Bristling at the implication that some decrepit old granny could trump her in desirability. There was something almost childish in the way she pouted and huffed about it.

"Back on track, then. The power behind the throne. What is it?" She tapped the diamond to remind them of their smelly, sweaty fate.

"I'm not leaving this universe until I get some bling out of it. I'll show him just who can be independent and brilliant and the most villainous..."

Pout pout.

[Delete](#)



by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

The ghosts paused mid-squabble, and NegaPa pried his neck out of Ma's strangle hold.

"Alright, alright, no need to get in a huff." Beckoning her back along the jetty, the parents floated ahead. "How about we show you..."

Hopefully this time, they weren't bringing a whole new meaning

to the 'parent trap'.

\*\*\*

It took quite a bit of sneakiness. The good thing about having a pair of otherworldly escorts that few others appeared to see, however, was that they provided excellent early warning. The fact that they could pass through walls and advise on the locations of key circuitry and security measures was also a help.

Finally, at the top of a thug-filled building, they came to an office.

"It's clear, come through."

Inside was a immense desk, surrounded by deep, dark wooden cases and shelves. It was clearly not Negaduck's; despite the spookiness, it had far too much refinement. That and not enough spikes.

"Lemme see here..." Ma was pondering over the display case in the back wall. It appeared to hold nothing more than relicts, souvenirs of battles past. "Ah hah...!"

Ducking into the woodwork, she soon reappeared to enthuse, "Just as I thought!" Floating over to Malicia, to point her in the right direction, "Lift open the top of that skull."

"And stand back," advised Pa. "We've only seen in the inside of here a couple of times, so who knows what else he's added."

Ominous. But at least it wasn't an elderly fish monger.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"Hmmm..." She was running a hand over the desk. "Very nice quality."

After a few moments of poking and prodding around the office, she followed their directions. Deciding to take the cautious approach, she stood back and wiggled her fingers. The skull sparkled momentarily and the top flipped upwards.

Because why take the chance when you could avoid traps AND look impressive with magic?

"Just whose office is this anyway?"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

No need for them to answer, as the entire rear wall folded back to reveal a central computerised control screen, surrounded by smaller surveillance monitors.

"Welcome, Director Hooter," announced a smooth but digitalised female voice.

"Oooh, they've gone electronic now," said Ma. "Fancy."

What was fancy indeed was the level of information contained therein. Read-outs of cash flow, status of key infrastructure, down to the movement of known militias. Even the amount of donuts left in the downtown market was captured. All in all, everything that affected life in the Negaverse was there, and it made for even better watching than Jersey Shore.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Director... Hooter?!" Jawdrop.

"But he's the head of S.H.U.S.H!" She spluttered. "Are you telling me that in this universe, he's the real big-wig around here?"

Scrambling inside the room she immediately began pushing buttons and flipping through screens. Which, considering Malicia still hadn't figured out how to write emails under a size 10 comic sans font, meant that her maneuvering of this master computer was not the smoothest.

"Can he control the city itself with these knobs? What happens if I press this one?!" Like a gleeful child.

Then to Ma and Pa she tilted her head. "So you knew Hooter

then, I take it? Did you work with him?"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Nah, way out of our league," conceded Pa. "Besides, he was no Director when we were around. He must'a shot to the top later."

But Ma was frowning. "We knew of him though, dat's fer sure. Took quite a shining to the boy when he was a lil' tyke. I think he saw somethin' in 'im... Maybe that's how this all came about..."

As if to answer that, out of pure coincidence Malicia's button smashing triggered a screen (besides the 'Cruise Missiles Launched' warning). Entitled 'PROJECT OVERLORD', it had a sideshot of Negaduck, apparently taken without his awareness...

... but was password protected.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

.....Wat.

Oh, no no no. This was too juicy. Why did there have to be a password?!

"PASSWORD? I SPIT ON PASSWORDS!" She fumed, slamming the keyboard.

Glancing around in a panic. "What's the password?!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Ma had her hands on her hips, scowling. "Well, isn't this peculiar." In that way mothers did when they stumbled upon a pile of unwashed laundry or a box of C4 under the bed.

"Hold on, I'll get it." Pa flew back into the main room and, after a quick scan, located the safe. Always good to keep backups in easy reach in case of electronic – or memory – failure. And safes

were no more immune to 'ghostbusting' than walls were.

A few seconds of floating through documentation later, and he stuck his head back out of the container. "Try BunnyFunFun41."

Worth a shot. What could possibly go wrong?

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"What? You didn't know about this?" She eyed Ma. "Does he know about this?"

Not willing to waste any time, she punched in the code without question, muttering. "You better not be yanking my tail."

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

The project screen didn't budge, but there was a flicker of activity on the right hand side of the map.

Ma squinted at it, then turned around to screech, "Did you just flood my hometown?!"

Malicious chuckle from the other room. It was, however, shortly followed by, "Alright, here you go: MrNa\$tY13. Wow, no surprises there."

Or would there be? Considering how trustworthy her accomplices were, it was hard to judge.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Well look at it this way: You probably drowned some crappy childhood classmates of yours." Too bad not all of us have that shining opportunity.

Again, she punched in the new code.

"Come on already." Glaring at the screen. "Let's get on with the

top secret gossip already!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Obligingly, the entry screen winked away to reveal a directory. Inside, there lay hundreds, if not thousands, of files sorted by date.

The earliest entry, shockingly, went back... **30 years?!**

"What is this...?" murmured Pa, leaning to stare over her shoulder, effectively answering Malicia's earlier query as to the level of their knowledge. From the looks of things, this was beyond anybody's knowledge.

Except for Hooter's.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Hmmm..." Eyes narrowed.

"Well, let's start at the beginning shall we?"

She clicked on the very first file.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

A video opened, preceded firstly by a title screen with a classification, serial number, and date.

It was shot in what appeared to be a laboratory room, or an interrogation chamber; very little was captured of the surrounds so it was not easy to identify. What was identifiable was the bushy browed tot sitting on the cold steel floor, clutching a puppy to his chest that was almost as big as he was. The duckling was staring up at whoever had put him there with trepidation but also with fierceness, like he would gnaw off the limb of anyone who tried to hurt him.

"Okay, Drake – it is Drake, right?" began a voice that could have belonged to a young Hooter. "Tell me, what do you have there?"

"A puppy," declared the little one, bill up proudly, grip tightening around the poor animal's neck. "It's **mine**."

"I see," noted the off screen voice lightly. "But do you realise that people will try to take things that are yours?"

Suddenly, a number of mannequins were pushed in from the left. They were lifeless, obviously, and the scowling faces scribbled on them were almost comical. But to a tiny toddler, it was terrifying.

Unlike most tiny toddlers, however, Drake snapped from terror into attack mode. Snarling, he leapt at the figurines – barely the height of a potplant he had no other opinion but to take them out by the knees – and from there, a flurry of biting and tearing took over that would have rivalled.. well, a tiny honeybadger.

Territory defended, the duckling held his puppy tight, backing up against the wall in fear of further attacks. The reaction from the grown-ups, instead, came as a pleasant surprise.

"Very good, Drake," the voice praised. "Here."

And an arm lent into shot to deliver into the boy's small clutches another puppy. Oh his eyes, how wide and excited they were at the sight! A prize under each arm, he toddled happily – with some difficulty, as the puppies were dragging behind – and off camera. Followed not seconds later by two sharp chrrrks which were probably the unfortunate puppies meeting their fate.

The tape then ended.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

At the immediate sight of the fluffy, vicious-looking duckling, Malicia's maternal side took over. "Awww! He's so wretchedly adorable! I want to stuff him down my shirt and keep him in there forever!"

At Negatoddler's declaration of ownership over the puppy she

tapped her bill thoughtfully. "Hmm... I see his possessiveness began early."

But as the video continued, and she listened to what Hooter was saying she grew quieter. When the screen went black she spun to stare at Ma and Pa.

"Hooter obviously saw something in him and decided to exploit it. But why? And where the hell were you two when this was happening?!"

Perhaps the videos would answer her question. She clicked through on another one a little further down the list.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Don't you sass us, missy!" bit back Ma. "We had more important things to do than watch that little brat! Like conning neighbours out of their Quackerware."

In fairness, it wasn't like they had taught him how to mix cocktails, then left him on his lonesome in some dungeon dimension...

Before further argument could ensue, the next tape began.

In a dingy classroom, a slightly older duckling played quietly with a few toys, namely a miniature axe and a stuffed bunny head.

Without warning, in from a side door burst another agent. Staggering forward, he clutched a bloody chest wound.

"Drake!" he wheezed dramatically, before falling onto his knees. "Help!"

The tot, clearly familiar with this person, stood agape, then tottled forward.

It was only when he reached his tiny hand out to touch the other, who had by this point sprawled across the floor, did the point of the exercise become clear.



teenage mallard who was gritting his teeth violently. "Isn't that cute, he thinks he can actually do science!"

Unnoticed by anyone, meanwhile, a hand reached through the closest window to deposit quite a different style of textbook on Drake's desk. It was only moments later noticed by the boy, who flipped through it at an impressive rate, expression slowly turning gleeful.

Soon after, he whipped around to face his tormentor.

"You know, Hamm, maybe if your girlfriend wasn't being such a distraction, giving me the googly eyes all lesson, I could work even faster."

Shocked, Hamm spun around to where the googly eyes were implied to be coming from.. only to realise that his girlfriend wasn't even in this class.

Of course, by then, Drake had already made some additions to the other boy's experiment in progress.

"Drake, you idiot." Snorted Hamm, rolling his eyes as he tipped the last test tube into the boiling beaker. "How about you concentrate on destroying everything you touch, and I'll concentrate on winning."

**KA-BLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAM**

Being the only one who had ducked, Drake stood up to take in the green muck that had exploded out the classroom with satisfaction. The rest of the classmates were frozen in shock, seen only as blinking eyes under a coating of sludge. The teacher, splattered against the blackboard, could only raise her arm to direct him to the door.

"Drake. Out."

"Yeah, yeah..."

Seconds later, the scene cut to another camera, this one inside the 'punishment box' the young mallard had apparently been sent to. At least with his size, it wasn't as cramped as it could have been, but he was bored. Until the burning daylight was

blocked by a familiar figure appearing above the bars.

"Nice work, Drake," said Hooter, casually. "Although you realise if you added benzylamine..."

His charge cut in flatly, "I could've got hexanitrohexaazaisowurtzitane. I know."

A rather maniacal look crept over the teen's features. "I'm saving that for later."

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Mmmmm..." The happy moan she escaped her lips caught her by surprise and she covered her mouth. Couldn't get too carried away in front of the NegaParents

Dork or no, that destructive streak was making Mal a tad damp in the swamps of Dagobah. Where's a cold shower when you need one?

Shaking her head so hard her pupils rattled in her skull, she snapped herself back to reality. "None of this explains why Hooter needs him! Obviously this version of the wrinkled windbag has power and influence, so why bother sharing any of it with our fluffy psychopath?"

Not that it mattered, because Hooter wouldn't be in power for much longer. Or so Mal had decided.

"I suppose I need to keep digging." Click click!

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Hey, remember—" said Pa, drifting down to her level. "Hoots weren't no big shot back then. He was an agent o' anarchy, sure, but there probably were 'undreds of those guys."

What popped up next was no video, but a veritable collection of

documentation tracing the circumstances leading up to one 'fluffy psychopath's' grab for power.

"But you know what they say... gotta start somewhere."

The archives themselves started with scanned letters and scribbled bits of code. Secret communication, alliances and frustrations of the underworld that Ma and Pa had been involved with back then. From the sounds of things, the highly corrupt government – if it could be loosely called that – had gotten greedy and decided cracking down on the criminal groups was a sure fire way to earn big bucks. For the gangs, it was bad for business.

'\$1.3mil spent in hush money to get \$1.5mil of banned exotic cheeses through, and the damn cops still lay out the rat traps!'

'Half my men have disappeared right off the streets.. and I'm sure it's not the whorehouse they got stuck in'

'This mob has got to go'

Yet, in the true style of low life bosses, they were all too paranoid or cowardly to make the first move themselves. Besides, what would they do post-coup? Run a criminal empire openly? What kind of maniac would be crazy enough to do that?

Meanwhile, Hooter kept tabs on the little maniac-in-the-making. Records of his own and informants' observations pointed to a young Drake who was analytically gifted but socially, not so much. Even as a troublemaker, he faced the same typical teen problem.. fitting in.

"Beat it, loser." Clad in an oversized and overstudded leather jacket like the rest of his group, Dimitri sneered down at his target. "You couldn't punk your way out of a spray can."

A shorter, squeakier weasel pitched in from the back, "Yeah, you gotta be stylin' to be a Rebel Rider. Not just some psycho. Besides..."

Swinging onto their motorcycles, with no small sense of superiority.

"You don't even own a bike."

And off they rode.. splattering a stunned Drake head to foot in mud. So much for his mohawk.

It was the same with the mad scientists – he was too reckless, even by their standards; the goths – too prone to outbursts of deranged laughter; the Fight Club – too scrawny; and the Satanists – too, well, freaky. Even they knew better than to eat the sacrifice.

How was he meant to become a big time crime boss if he had no gang to boss around! Protected by one already giant ego, Drake was not crushed by the continued rejection, but frustrated. How could they not see how much better he was than them?!

And then, it struck him... There was one career path that would suit him down to the ground. One where he didn't need anybody else.

And one where he could beat them all at their own games. Simultaneously.

But before Malicia could find out about that, out in the front of the office there came the sound of the door opening, and in came two pairs of footsteps.

((Sorry for the wait! And sorry too, minor edits in the last post to switch the polarity of the players. Negs is too much trouble to be a dork.))

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Malicia was no stranger to being an outcast. Unlike her worse half, however, she spent much of her childhood turning that blame inward. At what point that transformed into an unrelenting narcissism, well... let's just say there was a direct correlation starting at puberty.

She was so preoccupied by the flashes of overwhelming information on the screen that she didn't even register the footsteps drawing closer behind her.

"This is big." She was muttering. "Just wait until Negaduck finds out!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"And what brings you here?" The voice, elderly but dignified, was not addressing Malicia, but his guest. Apparently neither of them had noticed her or the open control room... but at the same time, they were blocking the only exit.

"The old pass n' pummel," replied a familiar gravelly tone. "Can't have people forgetting who the boss is around here."

"No," concurred Hooter, moving to join Negaduck at the window. "Your last rampage with the steam train and its improvised 'coal' has kept things quiet for months. Nobody would be foolhardy enough to challenge you after that. But you know how they are...."

"They need a little reminding every once and a while." It was only as the dictatorial drake turned around to concur that he noticed something was amiss. "Say... what do you have the central system panel open for?"

Judging by the old gander's expression of surprise then anger, he had no idea why it was open either. But it would not take them long to find out.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Nnnngh!" She nearly bit her lip when she heard the voices behind her. Looking around panicked, their conversation was drowned out by her need to find somewhere in the small room to dip out of sight.

But why hide? Malicia Macawber wasn't a coward! She could overpower one, feeble bag of bones. And surely Negaduck would assist her.

And yet the tiny reptilian portion of her brain was screaming to

get out of dodge. This was far bigger than herself.

Besides, if Hooter could manipulate Negaduck so easily... who was to say he wouldn't convince Negs to get rid of her?

Hide it was! Which now posed a unique problem in itself, being trapped in a small room with one exit.

So she did the only thing a demon could do when trapped.

With surprisingly impressive speed she scabbled up the side of the wall like a terrified cat, and clung, upside-down, to the ceiling.

Considering the weight of our anti-heroine, this was quite the feat. But survival instincts were an amazing source of improvisation in that respect.

So long as neither Negaduck or Hooter decided to look up.

[Delete](#)



by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

The sound of loading weapons indicated they were taking this breach rather seriously.

"How the hell did someone get in here?!" Carrying not one but two shotguns – there was no kill like overkill – Negaduck was backing into the normally sealed annex. "Nevermind the guards; you've got more booby traps around this place than an Irish pub!"

Hooter, having backed in facing the opposite direction, was more occupied with the realisation with what was left mid-snoop open on the control screen. Acting quickly, he closed it before the subject himself could notice, and wiped any alarm from his expression by the time he punched the actual alarm.

As sirens wailed and general chaos erupted around them, the Director pronounced serenely, "Judging by the system activity log, they can't be far. We'll find them before they get any further."

"You sure of that?" Scanning their surrounding thoroughly – except for those surrounds that happened to be above them – the caped crime-lord sounded less than convinced. "If they got in this far, they know what they're doing."

Eyes narrowed, fingers on both triggers. "Clearly we're dealing with an expert in stealth."

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Said 'expert in stealth' was barely hanging on. Her arms were beginning to shake as she fought her body's natural gravitational pull. Her claws had punctured straight through the ceiling to keep a steady grip, but to her horror she noticed that ever so slowly, with each breath she took, the stucco was beginning to crack. Small fracture lines were growing down the center and peeling out in all directions. It wouldn't be long before the entire ceiling came crashing down and her along with it.

Hopefully Negaduck wouldn't notice the teeny tiny white specks of paint that had landed on his black caped shoulder.

Her eyes darted left and right, trying to spot the otherworldly duo that had lead her into this mess.

Really, you two. Your help would be VERY nice right about now. Aaaaanytime now.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Would you look at that," Ma was whispering to her ghostly partner, on level with the two non-ghostly Negaversians yet somehow unseen by both of them. "Combat 12 gauge combination pump/autoloaders with bunny-seaking explosive rounds. Just like we got for his fifth birthday."

"Would've thought a mallard should've grown out of that by now," grumbled Pa.

Yup, no help at all.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Would you two quit floating around and do something?" She hissed from the side of her mouth. "Knock some stuff around, moan ominously, toss ectoplasm in their faces, anything."

If only both her hands weren't planted firmly in the ceiling. Then she could cast a spell to get herself out of this mess!

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

In what may have come as the shock of the century, the predecessors of Negaduck weren't the types to leap to another's assistance.

"Sweetheart," bit back Ma, not bothering to lower her voice. "If we were able to touch anything, this rotting Romeo 'ere would've already ectoplasmed all over yer monstrous melons!"

Pa didn't even have a chance to zing one back, for the noise – or was that the mention of Malicia's lovely jumblies – had caught the attention of one rather surprised son.

Which was about when a large chunk of falling ceiling plaster took both him and Hooter out.

That was one way to cause a distraction.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

And down she came shortly thereafter, landing on top of the plaster pile that was presently crushing Negaduck and Hooter.

Had they seen her? Were they even conscious?

She didn't even bother to find out. Scrabbling to her feet as fast as possible she darted for the exit as fast as a 250-pound super-strength monster could move.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Unfortunately for Malicia, scrabbling into the room from the other direction was a battalion of heavily armed goons. And boy were they miffed – she had interrupted their favourite game of See Who Can Thump Each Other's Skull the Hardest.

Coming face to face with a spooked succubus was the last thing they expected, however. For a second, they stood with mouths and maws agape.

"Get her!" bellowed one, and it was on.

Good work, guys. Firing blindly into the area where only two of the most senior bosses are sheltering. What could possibly go wrong with that.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Well crap. Left with no other choice she sprang back inside the secret room. A fireball lobbed in the direction of the ornate skull saw the metal door close behind her.

Ping ting ting! the bullets sang as they clattered against the sealed door.

Releasing a breath of air she let herself relax for a moment. She had narrowly escaped a life as the world's most beautiful swiss cheese.

Too bad she was now trapped in a room with something far worse than stray fire.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

In her moment of downtime, a thick metal shackle caught her wrist, just as an irate growl would catch her ear.

"I should've known you wouldn't quit snooping."

A wrench of the cuff, if done effectively, would have send her not-entirely-insignificant body weight tumbling forward over one of the control terminals, as the second shackle was slapped against her other wrist.

"There's only one thing for it..."

Cape draped around him like a black shroud of vengeance, Negaduck raised his hand... and brought it down upon her behind. Hard. And repeatedly.

While his parents facepalmed if only to be spared the sight, Hooter finally pushed his way out from under the plaster. And what did he do upon being greeted with the sight of a voluptuous villainess booty being worked over by his sadistic charge?

Sigh, and clean his glasses.

"This is exactly why we got you your own office," reproached the gander. "The damage you were doing to my desk..."

"Office smooifice," gritted Negaduck between thwacks. "I know this Malicia Macawber; there's no better way to get the info out of her."

Suuuure, that was his primary motivation. Regardless of the true nature of his exceptional drive, he did manage to belt out an interrogation while he belted her.

"What--"

Smack!

"--Did--"

Smack!

"--You--"

Smack!

"--Find?!"

SMACK!

Probably good the minions weren't around to witness this. Only his mentor and forebears. Nothing depraved about that at all.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Really. If he wanted results, he probably shouldn't have chosen a form of punishment that she enjoyed immensely.

"Eeeee!" She squealed like a pig in a grinder, her body writhing beneath his hand with each firm strike.

"Nothing! I didn't-- ah! -- see anything! I just --ooooh-- came here to --mmm!-- find out about your parent's legacy."

And in a way, this was the truth. She had come here specifically because Negaduck's parents claimed they had the answers to her questions. It just so happened they were the questions she had never thought to ask.

"Besides, you really think I'd know how to work this chaotic computer? I still don't understand how to send an email!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Admitting to a failing?" he leaned in to rumble. "Now I know you're definitely hiding something!"

MOAR SPANKING!

"Out with it! Or I'll stop!"

Wait, surely he meant go harder? Get the spiked paddle? No, no, he knew what he was doing.

Meanwhile, the pressure of her, erm, front on the panel was causing chaos across the world map. Cyclones here, train wrecks there, bad coffee there. Disaster!

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"PROJECT OVERLORD!" She barked immediately. Well, that was easy. "Just don't stop, please."

Taking a moment to glare at the other evil being in the room.

"We should talk about this alone."

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Lord Negaduck, cease this at once." Hooter, as it happened, decided it was time to intervene. "Whatever she has seen regarding your status as a mere figurehead used to control the population, I assure you it is all utter fabrication."

"What." Ceasing his ministrations on Malicia's behind, perhaps to her disappointment, the bitter cold that filled his tone was enough to make even the spirits shiver. "My status as a mere... what?"

The Director's face fell. Clearly his assumption that Negaduck was broadly aware of those rumours was false. He had overcountered.

Whoops.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Judging by Negaduck's reaction, it was clear that while the maniacal mallard had some sort of partnership with Hooter, he was still oblivious to all of the details.

Arms still cuffed behind her back, she stood up and leaned into Negaduck to keep Hooter out of earshot.

"Like I said. We need to discuss this privately." She hissed. "For starters, you can tell me what exactly your working relationship is with this dreadful version of S.H.U.S.H's Chief Commander!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"No." Frustrated beyond belief, the felon whipped around to face her. "I'm straightening all this out right now."

Not bothering to keep anyone out of earshot, he raved, "I don't know what stupid ideas you've been collecting in that empty head of yours, but I'm the boss around here! Get it? I am. **ME.**"

Which apparently included scope to a three year old like tantrum.

"All Hooter does—" Dismissive brush off of the Hooter in question. "Is the boring stuff that comes with running an empire. Managing the Treasury, maintaining the militias at my disposal, torturing the Pope. But he does what I tell him, and nothing eeELLsssssEEEE!!"

Cut off by a sudden series of teeth-clenching convulsions, steam smoked lightly off Negaduck's form for a moment. Eyes rolling into his skull, he slumped forward, lifeless.

Behind him, Hooter wrenched on a wire to rip the taser-like barbs carelessly out of the unconscious villain's back. With naught but an eyebrow raise at Malicia, he fired the device at her too.

As he had once taught a young Drake... why take chances.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)



by **Malicia** 1 year ago

Of course she still had to be handcuffed. Of course he had to ignore her and resort to pushing his weight around. Of course Hooter was prepared.

"You idiot!" She shrieked at the sizzling, unconscious heap on the ground and gave him a kick for good measure.

"You thought insulting someone who knows every predictable detail about you was a smart idea? Remind me again how you're supposed to be a criminal mastermind?"

Bzzzt! And down she went too.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

When they awoke, they would find themselves, predictably, in a dungeon. The cell faced inwards into a square room, edged with other not noticeably occupied cells. In the centre sat some rather large pieces of equipment that were covered; surely the blood splattered sheets were just for effect.

For a SHUSH compound it was remarkably rancid. Dank was heavy in the air, sludge dripped down the thick stone, and the bars were barbed with rust. Despite that, they looked more than sturdy...

... and knowing Hooter, there would be more to them than just bars.

The 'when they awoke' part, however, would prove difficult, as Negaduck was still passed out face down in the muck like a drunk sorority girl.

"What.. bacon..." he was muttering incomprehensibly. "Why don't you.. shove that down your pants.. and... SPACE PIRATES...!!"

Oh yeah, really showing off the mastermind there.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"Complete moron." Mal rumbled miserably from the corner of the cell where she sat curled up, hugging her knees. The conditions she had found herself in were absolutely preposterous. Even the St. Canard supervillain prison made sure to keep her cell clean and dry! This was no place for a lovely lady like herself.

"If your son weren't already unconscious, I'd beat him back there again!" She shouted somewhere at the ceiling, hoping that Ma and Pa were somewhere close by.

Finally, after a long period of grumbling and mumbling she

stretched out one clawed foot and jabbed Negaduck in the ribs as hard as possible.

"Time to wake up, Drake." She sneered.

[Delete](#)



by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

"Blwah-- huh!"

Bleary confusion snapped quickly into fully alert, fully paranoid hostility, as he glared up at Malicia from the floor.

"What did you call me?!"

"As I feared, she knows your original name," interrupted a voice from outside the cell. It was Hooter. "And presumably much more than that."

"Ridiculous." On his feet, Negaduck was adopting his usual stand-over tactic, which was effective in that their captor was much shorter than he, but not so effective in that he was on the wrong side of the bars. "This broad is just another plaything; all boobs, no brain. She's got all the investigative capabilities of a potted cactus."

Hopefully that potted cactus would understand the need for a good bluff under the circumstances. Of course he usually valued her intellect and value as a person.

Really.

But Hooter was looking dubiously up over his glasses. "Then if you have weakened to the extent that this plaything, as you call her, is aware of your past, then we are going to have... difficulties."

"Weakened'?!" Mega-rage-plosion. "Why you little... I didn't tell her anything!"

Above, Ma and Pa watched on, phantasmal arms folded with no compassion whatsoever. "Serves him right for doin' anyway with us, after everything we did for him!"

It wasn't like they had ever succeeded in killing him!

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"I've had enough of your mind games, you crusty little malfeasant."

For once, the words were not directed at Negaduck. A novel change.

Having lunged her way to the front of the cell, Mal had entered the classic stand-over-the-stand-overer tactic, a.k.a., the typical posture of someone much taller than everyone in the rest of the room.

"You're simply trying to manipulate Negaduck into getting rid of me, just as you've pulled the strings on him his entire life!" She roared. "He didn't tell me anything, and you know it! Everything I learned was thanks to your 24/7 surveillance of his life!"

Turning to Negaduck now, she eyed him sternly. "What do you even know about Hooter? Has it never once occurred to you that he has been a constant presence in your life since you were just a child? Did you not question that, even once? Have you ever stopped to think, somewhere, in that ego-drenched brain of yours, just how you came into power?"

She stopped only momentarily to massage her temples in frustration.

"For a supposed evil genius, you're an absolute failure at seeing what's right in front of you!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Intense stare matched her intense stare. He would get it.

Any moment now.

" ... Like how that artery on your forehead gets bigger every time you mystery solve?"

Or not.

"My dear," chimed in Hooter, calm as ever. "I believe you'll find I have absolutely no intention to use Negaduck to 'get rid' of you."

Walking away, adding as if it was nothing, "I intend to get rid of you both."

This came, as one would expect, as rather a shock on multiple levels to he whom had been out evil-geniused. So much so Negaduck could only screech in outrage, "WHAT?!"

Too bad Malicia wouldn't have long to enjoy her 'told you so' moment. Or any other moments.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"SHUT UP! It's not that big! It's barely noticeable!" All that sudden bravado vanished as she fussed and mussed over trying to get her hair to cover up the offending spot on her forehead.

Only after Hooter revealed his double-crossing did she turn to glare at Negaduck again, hands on her hips.

"If this really surprises you, then there truly is no hope for this universe under your so-called reign."

Turning to Hooter she continued airily. "So why get rid of him now? After spending countless years and resources into shaping him into the perfect tyrant, why dispose of him? Do you truly intend to rule this world out in the open?"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Well and truly over the surprise – and the whole damn situation – Negaduck was leaning through the bars, gripping them with the sort of force that would be better applied to an elderly

administrator's throat.

"I knew you were getting old, but I hadn't realised dementia had set in this early!" he snarled. "I paved the way so you could roll in and enjoy the spoils, is that what you're telling me?"

Eyes narrowed behind the black mask. "You have **no** chance. The only thing propping up this miserable world is the power structure I enforce. Challengers are few and far between because they know the hell I will rain down upon them personally. You take me out, the whole system will fall faster than Herb after one too many coconut daiquiris."

"You are quite right, as usual." Hooter had strolled back into the front of the cage, this time with remote in hand. "The unique flair you bring to mass cruelty and torment cannot be replicated. And to think, had I left you to your own devices you probably would have gone on a mindless, aimless spree of destruction. Such a waste that would have been."

Eyeing his charge with an almost cold – but almost entirely put upon – pity before he continued. "But certain technological developments, combined with your notably lengthy absences of late, have created.. opportunities. We no longer need you personally to oppress the population through fear. We have something far, far more diabolical."

Press of a button and a wall on the far right opened to reveal a number of agents busy with a video camera and a handcrafted set, filming what appeared to be a tiny marionette Negaduck, with sloppily sewed cape and scrawled upon scowl. A literal puppet dictator.

"Podcasts."

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"I have to admit, the resemblance is uncanny. I hate to say it, but Hooter may actually have the advantage on you." Not a hint of sarcasm in her voice.

"Besides, just about everyone is listening to podcasts these

days!" She would include herself in that category eventually. Once she figured which 'pod' these mysterious casts were hidden in.

Deciding now would be a very good time to receive some spectral support, Mal shuffled off to the corner of the cell where she was seemingly mumbling to herself.

"Your help would be very much appreciated right now. After all... if you let him die, guess where he'll end up? Living next door to you in the fiery pits, where you get to deal with his brand of villainy for the rest of eternity." She clicked her tongue.

"Plenty of time for you three to catch up on family matters..."

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard!" Oblivious to the impromptu family meeting happening behind, Negaduck was still railing at their jailor. "You think you can replace me with a toy shop reject that even Quackerjack wouldn't touch?"

That wasn't true. Quackerjack would probably love a Negapuppet. Assuming he hadn't created a marionette theatre of the whole damn dimension already.

Determined to bring the advantage back in his favour, the caged crime lord continued, "I'll have you know, I didn't run everything past you. I have back-ups. Insurances. You have no idea what you'll be dealing with..."

"True." Thanks, Hooter, very matter of fact. "But I will soon. Thanks to this—"

Tarp pulled off a large piece in the centre of the cell block, cue dramatic unveiling of... a dentist's chair?

Negaduck merely quirked a brow at it. Hooter cottoned on to the lack of horrified screaming a moment later, and with a polite little cough, directed his attention upwards.

Oh. That.

Built into the ceiling was a mess of tubing tipped with spikes (what else). And a large bulk of exposed, sparking wiring.

That did not look good.

"One of Dr Bellum's projects," explained the Director as the 'doctor' in question tumbled into the room. "We call it the Brain Drain."

Bellum, who could barely be seen through the mess of black stringy hair that covered her face, teetered over to give the usual explanation of the device that would bring about their doom.

"Bweeehahaeeee...**BARBARBARWW!!**" Or not.

As the very literally mad scientist slithered away again to take over the controls, Hooter took over the exposition. "Any living creature can be plugged into the system." Seizing a test bunny and strapping it tightly into the seat, Bellum was demonstrating just that. "And their memories will be digitalised."

Once the skull cap lowered from above onto the head of a very reluctant rabbit, its memories began to play on a sidescreen. Aww, lookit that, hopping through the – not particularly green – meadows of the Negaverse, prior to its capture.

"The memories can be merely recorded, or drained from the subject completely."

An unkept crooked finger reached forward to press the 'ERASE' button.

Bunny twitched for a moment. The screen faded to nothingness.

Then its head exploded.

"It is still undergoing some refinements," said the gander, nonplussed, using a neatly ironed handkerchief to wipe the bunny bits off the side of his face.

Back in the jailhouse corner, the Negapparitions were stunned. Not by the exploding rabbit – that was reasonably par for the course around these parts – but by the fact that Malicia was right. Totally.

Pa turned back to her. "Well what in sweet Hades do you want us to do?"

Helping didn't exactly come naturally in the Negaduck family line.

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

"You can flex those spectral muscles of yours!" Mal hissed. "It takes quite a bit of willpower, but if you concentrate hard enough you should be able to move objects, even slightly. If you could find a way to open this cage -- getting the key would be a start -- I can handle the rest."

Glancing back at the foreboding death machine she shuddered.

"Can you imagine what that thing would do you my stunningly perfectly hair?!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"Darling, let me give you a lesson in 'perfect' sometime," said Ma, floating away with a little haughty wiggle.

Across the cell, other muscles were being flexed – metaphorically anyway – as Negaduck tried to convince the old man that he still had the upper hand. For some reason.

"So, you have to get me in that chair, but can't kill me to do so?" Oh the spite the caped captive directed downwards. "And how, exactly, are you planning on achieving that?"

Maintaining his ever unruffled air, Hooter replied, "Like this."

From above, restraints flew at the imprisoned pair – but unlike the good ol' cast iron ones Negaduck had taken to earlier, these were of the robotic rope variety. Dozens of them swapped to wrap each victim individually like a mouse caught by a constrictor, raising the question why didn't the Director simply lock Negaduck in place prior to his regaining consciousness, and

secondly how much tentacle porn references the Duckverse could actually handle.

While Malicia was left to be bundled up – along with her beak, if she knew what was good for her – her accomplice was managing to give them the slip. Not with slippery grease or anything lard like that would make that a useable pun, but through a backflip here, a spinning launch off the wall there.

All in all, sonny boy's acrobatic theatrics were proving more successful than his folks attempts to wrestle the controls from a gleeful Bellum. Not that her cackling and flailing was getting in the way; they simply hadn't grasped the concept of grasping anything yet.

"Focus!" nagged Ma.

"I **would** focus if you'd all just **shut up already!**" roared back Pa, hands still passing through everything they touched.

The pandemonium continued, however. At least, until a clever feint by Negaduck tricked the grasping arms to punch through the bars themselves. Out he tumbled, landing at the Director's feet.

Slowly, he rose, ready to dish out a lesson to his supposed second in command.

Except there, in Hooter's hand... was a dandelion.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

Malicia was shrieking and wriggling in the grasp of the robotic restraints. Fake tentacles?! Such an abomination should not exist!

"**JUST GET HIM!**" She yowled, both at Negaduck and the Negaparents. Surely among the three Negarelatives, one of them had to be competent enough to do something against a wrinkly foot-stool.

In the meantime, she was trying everything possible to break her restraints: Intense heat, sheer strength, pitching a fit. Evidently,

whoever created such a contraption had prepared well in advance for all manner of super-powered beings.

"Picture how badly you'd like to wring out your son's neck!" She called to Pa. "Just imagine that scrawny little windpipe of his between your fingers!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

It was not Pa that it worked on. A sudden vicious understanding lit up in his female counterpart's eyes, and she reached forward to seize the controls.

Success!

Managing to overpower a joystick that was directing one set of the mechanical arms, Ma wrenched it around wildly... and collected Negabellum in its grasp. What followed then was pure chaos as the scientist was pummelled repeatedly into the roof and surrounding structures.

"**AAAHAAAA!**" shrieked the mad ball of hair as she was flailed about. "**BAAWAAARRGGH!!**"

Negaduck and Hooter took this in for a moment before resuming their standoff.

"Get in the chair, Drake." Taking a step forward, dandelion held out threateningly. "I have plenty more of these. Do you want me to use them?"

Like a vampire exposed to garlic, the masked mallard was backing up. "No.. noo!"

Nearby, Pa was facepalming. Moral dilemmas. Not one of the family's strong suits. But selfishness was. And there was no way he wanted to spend one more minute in the underworld than he had to with his egotistical, degenerate descendant!

"Look." Floating to the side of the Director, he caught the cornered mallard's attention. "That whole thing about those flowers n' fairies is complete bunk!"

"What?" stared back Negaduck, confusing the gander who apparently was not in on this conversion.

"We made the whole thing up, just to mess with you!" burst out Pa. "But Hooter here is using it as a vulnerability!"

There was a second, the type of second where somebody is wrapping their head around the realisation that something they unquestioningly believed since childhood was a lie. Then.. "RAAAAR!!" Punch!

Of course the punch went sailing straight through the ghost and connected with Hooter's face instead. The elderly Director stumbled backwards, but would not have time to recover for he was shortly – get it – snatched up and thrown through the apparition. Where he landed.. in the Brain Drain.

"My entire life you've been lying to me! Manipulating me for your own ends!" Hard to tell whether Negaduck was engaging in this rather hypocritical rant at his father or mentor or both. "Oh you'll pay for that."

And, being the helpful mother she was, Ma gleefully hit the button to bind Hooter to the chair, and to his fate.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

Really, it should not come as a surprise that Ma understood the sweet satisfaction of strangling a Nega-male, though Malicia's mind refused to comprehend even the slightest possibility that she shared anything in common with (shudder) Negaduck's mom.

But who are we kidding. This is the King of Depravity we're talking about here. A little Oedipus complex added into the mix really wouldn't be a huge shocker.

As Negaduck coped with his childhood issues in his usual productive manner, Malicia finally wrestled off the vast majority of the restraints and clambered out of the cell -- just in time to witness the event.



BAM!

"NNGGHHH!"

BAM!

"AAARRRH!"

Man, he could do this all day.

Meanwhile, the parents had taken note of the demoness edging towards the exit. They shared a glare, an instant meeting of malevolent minds.

No way was she getting away with blackmailing them so easily.

Straining, they both took hold of the mechanical arms pinning a demented Negabellum to the ceiling, and just as Malicia passed underneath... they yanked her free.

And down Bellum plummeted upon the villainess's head, screaming and clawing like a banshee.

With any luck, what would result would be one hell of a cat fight – not in the sexy sexy sense, but in the scratching and yowling waking everyone up at 3am manner.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"Ghh...! What the... GET OFF! HEY! **DO NOT TOUCH THE HAIR! NO!**" Malicia had vanished into a cloud of kicking and screeching that circled around the room like an estrogen-laden tornado.

Finally the dust cleared and the demoness had managed to pin the crazed scientist beneath her, although Bellum had managed to grab ahold of Mal's hair and was yanking it out by the handful.

Pausing to glare at the two apparitions clearly responsible for blocking her escape, she tossed the writhing lunatic into the dungeon and slammed the door shut. Huffing and puffing now, she wiped the sweat from her brow and reared around.

"So, think you can double-cross me, do you?!" She snarled, gripping the diamond that served as Ma and Pa's spiritual anchor.

"Clearly it's time I show you just what happens to those who dare cross Malicia Macawber!"

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

Which was when she was hit from behind with a force like a sledgehammer. Or was that an actual sledgehammer?

In any case, if the surprise blow worked as intended, the mighty Malicia would find herself bowled straight into the Brain Drain chair, with all its waiting grabby grabby claws.

Leaving the diamond to be caught out of the air.

"Terrifying." Stepping over the still smoking body of Hooter, dumped face down on the floor, Negaduck relaxed against the control bench once more. "But perhaps we can save that show for another time."

There may have been some lazy inspecting the gem between his fingers, before quirking a brow back at his presumably prone partner.

"You wouldn't want to be taking your retribution out of turn now, would you?"

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

It was fortunate his partner was so thick-skulled (pun intended), otherwise that slab of metal to the head might have actually caused some real damage. As it was, however, the demonness flew straight into the chair -- butt up -- and found herself restrained in a rather awkward position as the brain drain zeroed in on her skull and attached itself.

"Are you serious?" Said she who was engaged in a rather intimate

position with a chair.

"Why would you want to turn me into... that?!" A motion to the unconscious lump o' Hooter. "I'm the one who discovered how he was manipulating you! I can tell you everything about it! About Project Overlord, and how he's been training you since you were just a fluff-ball! I can tell you everything!"

And therein lay the reason she was currently sitting in the chair.

[Delete](#)



by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

"Why, how very sweet of you."

Cheeky tug of her tail, as if she were a misbehaving little piggy stuck in a troth.

"Offering me so much, when I have all I need to know, right here."

Patting the trusty ol' Brain Drain monitor, which was playing the so recently retrieved memories from Hooter, starting off when he was just a fluff-ball of a gosling himself.

Never looking a gift demon in the mouth, however, Negaduck lowered so they were face to masked face for the next piece of not so reassuring reassurance. "As an extra special reward, I won't blow up your brain."

Reaching up, the dial was adjusted from 'COMPLETE DRAIN', to 'HALF DRAIN', to 'JUST PROM NIGHT', to 'LAST WEEK'.

"Just a bit of it."

And there went THE SWITCH.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

"Gee, how generous of yoEeeEeeeEEEEEE!!!"

The monitor sprang to life once more and seemed to do a quick

sorting through her memories from earliest to latest: small glimpses of her own childhood alongside Morgana, bits and pieces of their high school years, the day of her expulsion and subsequent trial. Leaving home, vowing revenge.

And men. So many, many men. One naked, sweaty, grunting face after the other. Evidently Malicia the 'lady' went through a rather exciting phase between her exile and arrival to St. Canard.

Then onwards to the last few years: Arriving in St. Canard, her first fight with Darkwing. Flirting with the masked hero and being flat-out rejected. Numerous crimes and showdowns against Morgana, Darkwing, and the rest of their merry gang of heroes. Meeting Negaduck via vehicular slaughter. Him becoming a demon temporarily. Their first night together. Followed by many, many more nights together. Crimes and shenanigans abound.

Finally, her memories caught up: Summoning the parents to get the dirt on Negs. Learning his real name. Deciding it would be 'better' for him if she took a piece of Power Pie in the Negaverse. And then her discovery of Project Overload.

"Ddddddon't ruinn my haaaaair." Was all she could utter as the machine readied itself to do some scramblin'.

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

It looked like the dirt would be coming back his way twofold.

Except from the increasingly frustrated – and, when it came to her previous sexcapades with other males, flat out disgusted – way he was staring at the screen, it was not appreciated.

"What? What is this?! I said the last week only, you stupid..."  
Indiscernible roar of annoyance. "Do you really think I have time to watch this ridiculous soap opera?"

Anger cumulated with the control panel taking a bashing. And, despite the efforts of his folks to drag him back physically by the cape, the damage was done.

With an enormous splutter and spark, the hardware konked out.

Not before sending one final burst of power into Malicia's cerebrum.

Fortunately that appeared to have little effect on the playback functionality. Unfortunately, there may have been more of an effect on the demoness's hair do.

Calming, Negaduck glanced over and jabbed his partner rather carelessly in her cheek.

"Eh, she'll be fine."

---

Some time later – enough time to presumably sort through the memory files and deal with that which needed to be dealt with – the two of them were up on a roof top overlooking the vast stretch of the murky bay. Two banana lounges, complete with umbrellas that were totally unnecessary when the sun was blocked by smog, were set up like it was a sort of tropical resort.

The body of the still unconscious Malicia had been dumped gracelessly into one. She had also undergone a costume change into something more (in)appropriate. Such was the danger of being knocked out and brain drained around Negaduck.

The malicious mallard himself was stretched out on the lounge beside her, slurping on a gory looking cocktail.

It had to be said, there were worse ways to come out of a coma.  
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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

They say that many awake from a coma when their brains are stimulated by something warm and familiar: A loved one's voice, a gentle hand-squeeze, physical contact...

But for Malicia, it was the light scent of a well-mixed alcoholic beverage in her near vicinity that led to her eyes popping open. Sitting up immediately, the demoness grabbed the pitcher on the table next to her and finished it off with one big, noisy slurp.

Wiping her mouth with her sleeve, she paused to notice she was no longer wearing her usual green dress. Blinking momentarily, she turned to regard the mallard next to her.

"Am I wearing... a chastity belt???"

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

The far more pressing question was.. how was he meant to scrape out that delicious alcoholic slime at the bottom of his drink before Malicia got to it?

"What the hell do I know about women's fashion?" Far more preoccupied with peering into the high ball glass. Unsuccessfully trying to lick it out. So that left only one option – open wide, tap the upsidedown glass, hope for the best.

**SPLODGE.**

Grumbling, Negaduck wiped the muck off his face, before the now complete lack of beverages prompted him to twist around and bellow.

**"Hey, who'd I have to mutilate to get another Charred Remains cocktail around here?!"**

Up the side stairs toddled the 'help'. It was a bit of a wait, as said help shuffled along with a pained limp. Hunched back. Braindead expression.

"A–apologies, master," said Hooter, shakily setting down a tray of appropriately gruesome refreshments.

Cruel, perhaps, but better than a Negaversian–style severance package.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

Rubbing her eyes, she felt the fog lifting from her mind. It felt like her brain had been scrambled with a spike–plated whisk.

Considering the present company, there was a possible chance this was more than just a metaphor.

Glaring at Negaduck, she leaned over to grab his wrist tightly before he could claim another drink. "What the hell did you do to me?" She demanded. "I know you know that I know something but now I don't know what that something was, and it's obviously your doing!"

What she did remember was that she had come to the Negaverse to find answers. She knew she had found them. She could feel it. And yet... she just couldn't remember. It was like having a specific word on the tip of your tongue but no matter how hard you tried to recall what it was, the exact definition could not be found.

What she did know is that the Negaversian J. Gander Hooter had been manipulating Negaduck, and as she watched the old gander try to shakily add some ice cubes to the pitcher, it became apparent to Malicia that he had played the game and lost.

And so had she.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"This is the thanks I get?" Accusatory but not surprised. "I bring you on a Negaversian vacation while I take care of business, and you blame me for yet another one of your wipeout hangovers."

Not even really trying. So he knew that she knew that he knew that she knew that she had known something, but there would be only one thing she would really know now – that she would not be getting anything out of him.

Standing, Negaduck stretched and lazily made his way over to one corner of the patio. "Speaking of business..."

And there, bundled together, was Ma and Pa. Looking very surly, but unable to do much about it, for they appeared to be both bound and gagged.

How.. how was that even possible?

"I've appreciated having you both around so very much."  
Lowering to the level of the furious gaze of his father. "Rather than send you away, the least I can do is set you up somewhere cosy, somewhere fitting for.. retirement. Somewhere.. seafront."

As he rested his bazooka on one end to deposit a tiny, gleaming flash of metal down the barrel – a diamond ring – their death glares switched to desperate protests.

But all for naught. The weapon was up on his shoulder, and with an enormous flash of back blast and smoke, the round and the ring disappeared over the horizon into the bay beyond. And so did they.

Ah. Relaxing.

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

Not relaxing for long, as his vacation companion decided to pitch a Level Six Temper Tantrum.

"NO NO NO! **THIS ISN'T FAIR!** You ALWAYS get your way! **ALWAYS!** For once I want to win!" This was accented with a childish foot stomp that threatened to take down the entire building beneath them.

"You are SUCH an ungrateful brat!" The irony flew overhead faster than the banana lounge that was lobbed off the side of the roof.

"I deserve glory, riches, and respect! I should have men lined at my feet, begging to taste my beautiful body! I should be wearing a crown of priceless one-a-kind gems in my perfect hair!"

It was just then she caught sight of her 'perfect hair' in the reflection of the metal tray on the table.

To this day, Negaversions still wonder why their master unleashed a sonic boom that busted every glass window within a ten-mile radius.

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

On what remained of the crumbling penthouse, Servant Hooter sat up. It was astounding how, being closer to Ground Zero, he hadn't been turned into a Charred Remains cocktail himself.

"Oh.. my..."

While his now twice scrambled brains took to processing that, Negaduck shot up across the balcony.

"**What?!**" Hoooboy, here's hoping that was a temporary case of deafness. From the way he was bashing the side of his own head, however, and staring around in confusion, it was a little more than that.

On the plus side, at least she hadn't sung.

((Deaf Negs. That could make for a fun side story. And somehow, I bet it would end up something like [this](#)..))

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by [Malicia](#) 1 year ago

**"I SAID YOUR PENIS IS SO SMALL I NEED A MAGNIFYING GLASS JUST TO FIND IT"** Judging by the lack of response, her own suspicions were confirmed.

Her bill slid into a wide, smug, smile.

This was too good.

((OOC: ROFL. For some reason Negs basically with the hearing of an old man cracks me up. He'll need to get one of those giant horn things to stick in his ear))

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by [Negaduck](#) 1 year ago

Picking himself up, mind spinning around the best way to handle this new situation, Negaduck took a moment to even realise there was a big, grinning demoness looking down forebodingly

on him.

How had she, of all people, snuck up on him like that anyway? It wasn't like his exceptionally sharp senses would have ever missed the slightest creak in the floorboards – much less, say, overt shouting.

**"What are you grinning about?!"**

Had Malicia broken her brain? Had she forgotten that he had won? With absolutely no consequences whatsoever?

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by **Malicia** 1 year ago

From Negaduck's vantage point, Malicia opened her mouth again to speak but it seemed like no words were coming out. Or perhaps they were muffled, as though he had cotton stuck in his ears.

One thing was fairly obvious though: Based on her posture and expression, it had been something very not-nice.

The demonness then grabbed the remaining pitcher of Charred Remains (which at this point could very well contain ingredients of its namesake, what with her explosive outburst) and in true scorned female fashion, upturned it and emptied it over her lover's head.

Then she stormed away, presumably back to the portal that would get her home.

Which, off-screen, would take a good 6-hours for her to find... not because her scrambled brain had forgotten the way. Malicia Macawber was simply shit-all when it came to navigating directions.

[Delete](#)



by **Negaduck** 1 year ago

"H-HEY!" Spluttering, doing his best to continue the raging

through alcohol and bits of, well, remains. **"You can't talk to me like that!"**

Reflecting on that, just for a moment, considering he had no actual idea what was spoken.

"... I think."

But before he could think on that too much, a slip on a knocked over glass sent him on a trip... over the edge of the balcony.

**--CRASH--**

Definitely one to chalk up in the 'win' column.