

Parisian Nightmares

By Angel Mejia

The city of Love runs cold in the dark night. Its deep catacomb corridors strangle the entrails of the street. But hear! Listen. There's a bellow in the cold October wind. Like a specter, a phantom calling in the breeze. Bellows of the beast, the creature that prowls the fog of Paris dew. It moves in the shade, like a serpent on the prowl, like an arachnid whisking upon its ivory moonlight threads. A nightmare haunts the streets of Paris. Pale leftovers from its midnight feast, there on the street under soft morning rain.

The hooves from horses tick and tack outside the glooming aurora, iridescent beams of pastel sunlight enter my apartment . I dress in morning suit and walk down creaking steps, spiders stalk my eyes, there in the dark corners of the corridors. I see her there, at the step's tail, exiting her door. A new tenant perhaps. Oh, but who would rent a room in this ancient building? I meet the specters in her eyes. My blood runs cold, like frozen river beds in the dead of Winter. My breath tightens- Oh, I feel worms in my stomach- There's death in her eyes, midnight cascades for hair, poison in meal in the netting of the spider. Crawling closer, dawning nearer. I find my end, there in the claws of a Spider-woman.

“Beautiful is the morning, isn't it?” she says.

“Oh oh, yes. It's breathtaking” I respond.

I take my leave and bid her farewell. On my morning walk, I witness a droning scene there, in an alleyway. A new victim had fallen to the beast. A crowd surrounds the cadaver. I get closer, curiosity pummels my mind. What is it? What happened? What is over there? Who is it? Who is dead there, picketed by a crowd of vultures? Lo! Ripped open- Torn apart! Like a hibiscus opening awake from a bad dream, he sleeps on the street so soundly. His eyes with the rot of fear profoundly. Dark red wine spreads through the pebbled walkway, like blood rivers in Celtic forests. It runs down and down the legs of the street. I dream of the scene over and over. Sleepless nights ensue. The newspapers go on and on, endless names with no faces. Opened like chocolate boxes, strawberry perfumed aura 'round their pebbled tombs.

A night thereafter, a scent of sweetened incense kisses my room. The new tenant, she peeks around her window pane. Her taps awake me, their sound is calming, like an embalming under flower rain. There's death perfumed in her velvet raven hair. Her specter arms wisp and willow in the air. Her voice whispers in my ear, whispers of Laurel coronations, incantations from the flower moon. I've fallen in love with the spider woman. My candles suddenly extinguish, my room becomes dark and isolated. I am hypnotized, sighs in my lungs exhale contemplations. Fluctuations of visions enter my eyes. I see a sanctum in ancient caverns. Catacombs of sleeping skulls, the rattling of bones like snakes. Hissing in the midnight bower. Bats, rats and worms confess in the cathedral

under the Earth. Cannons roaring, like spiders roaming, they heed my name. Translucent ecstasy in the ocean waves, creatures and their deep-sea bellows resonate in my entrails.

The riders of the night stride through storms and phantom hordes. Delicate death, o' son of the night, give me death or fury! Lo, heave. I see a forest of old. Snow covers my hair, and all the arum lilies lay ritually weeping there. Fog welcomes me like bath waters waiting to engulf flesh and bone. I snap back to my Parisian flat, no longer in candle-lit tone. A sweet strawberry aroma kisses the air as moonlight phantoms enter the gloom of the room.

Closer and closer the Spiderwoman crawls to my bed. I realize death is looming over my lips. Cobweb incantations as the Spiderwoman claws, grips across my ceiling floors. The Parisian breeze peeks through the window as the crows bellow and gawk outside. I die tonight, in the claws of the Spider-Woman. Shivering and enthralled, I stalk her movement in the room. Midnight gowned with 8 legs sprouting from her ribs, and hips. She dipsdown upon my chest, I feel the weight of death. My lungs sigh and inhale the swooning aroma of strawberry wine. There in the corner of the room, the dead await my sake. Endless they are abounding, pale and cob-web draped. I will not die tonight! I bite into her velvet neck. A deafening bellow shrieks upon my ear. She dashes out the window pane. Out into the moonlight, where she disappears into the black velvety gloom. Dark wine drapes down my fangs. Her strawberry scent leads me to my dinner. That is how I caught the Spider-Woman in the Parisian moonlight.