

Mindwipe Castle

Chapter 3: Terror

“So, why did you wanna talk to me?” Misty giggled, floating over Miranda as she laid in bed.

“I have some... Theories.” Miranda said softly. She still hadn’t recovered yet... She slept through most of the afternoon and even now she looked as though she might pass out again at any moment.

“Well... I’m not really that smart.” Misty said, spinning in place, enjoying the feeling free motion gave her, “Maybe Holi might be able to help? She seems smart!”

“There is one thing you can do that Holi can’t.” Miranda replied “I need you to go through the walls of the castle and look around.”

Misty paused her spinning and looked down at Miranda. “Is that allowed? I don’t wanna get in trouble. Mistress was scary when she was scolding Raven...”

“It’s... It’s fine...” Miranda said. She seemed to be getting weaker... It worried Misty, but she really couldn’t do anything about it... “If flying through walls wasn’t... Allowed... They wouldn’t have let you join. Right?”

“Yeahhh” She said, flapping her arms and letting herself bounce up and down as though she was a bird flying. It felt... Comforting to do these things... It reminded her how free she was... “So... You want me to fly around the castle?”

“And outside it. If... If possible.” Miranda said. Her face was starting to get pale...

“Uh... Uh...” Misty felt worry bubbling up into her. She didn’t like that. She didn’t like worrying... “Right away!” She said, flying towards one of the walls and bumping straight into it.

“What?!” Miranda said, sounding surprised. “What happened?”

“S-Sorry!” Misty said, floating back away from the wall and looking back at Miranda. She seemed more energetic now. That was good! Right...? “I forgot! I can’t go through walls while I’m dressed!”

Miranda sighed and laid back down onto the bed. “Well... That’s an unusual limitation...”

“I know, right?” Misty said, “It was soo confusing at first. But my clothes can’t go through things and I can’t go through my clothes.”

“I... See...” Miranda said softly. She seemed to be fading again...

Misty began to pull her clothes off, tossing them onto Miranda’s bed as she did.

“What are you doing?” Miranda asked, “Just toss them on the floor, not on me!”

“Sorry! They go where they want!” Misty replied, then flew through the wall.

She was gonna explore! But before that... She had to make one little detour. Flying down the barracks dorm rooms, she flew through one of the doorways.

On the other side, Silvia and Eliza were sitting on their beds talking about something, but the sudden appearance of a very naked ghost girl startled them both out of the conversation.

“Wh-What are you doing?! Where are your clothes!” Eliza stammered in alarm.

“I got rid of them!” Misty giggled.

“Go put them back on then!” Eliza growled “You almost gave me a heart attack!”

“Nah, your heart’s too strong for that!” Misty said, spinning as she flew around the room. “But guess what guess what?”

“Wh-What...?” Silvia said softly looking up at the naked ghost nervously.

“Someone isn’t sleeping like she should~” Misty giggled, then flew through the ceiling. She could hear the sound of the door opening behind her. Good. Silvia would make sure Miranda was taken care of...

That task done, she continued to fly upwards. She went through three or four floors before leaving the top of the castle. “Wow... That was so many extra floors...” Misty mused to herself as she looked around the outside of the castle.

She paused... Something was weird... There were no stars in the sky. No moon... Nothing. It was as though an endless black abyss surrounded the castle from all sides. She couldn’t even see the land in the distance.

That was super weird... As a ghost, she could normally see in the dark perfectly well... But... She couldn’t see anything in the distance...

She looked down and... That was even more surprising. The castle was there but... There was no courtyard. No land at all. It was just... The castle. Floating in the darkness.

She floated down the side of the castle to get a better look. As she reached the base, she could tell... There was no ground. Not outside of the castle anyways...

She peaked under the castle and it looked like a long flat surface of repeating stone patterns. She flew under it, twirling a few times as she looked over the floor from below.

After a moment, something caught her eye. Some of the stones seemed to be purple rather than gray. That was pretty weird! She picked a spot in the middle of a large patch of purple stones and flew up into it...

And bounced off.

“That was weird!” She giggled, before flying up into it again and bouncing off again. She put one hand to the stone and pressed, feeling it push back on her.

“Oooh... Neat...” She said softly. It’d been so long since she felt something like this. Something pushing against her as though she was real...

Suddenly, a face appeared in her mind. Pale white with jet black eyes, and an angry expression... More angry than she had ever seen anyone have before... A voice called out harshly in her head. “Leave.”

Misty let out a yelp, and began to fly. She didn’t know where she was going but she had to leave! She... She had to go away, to... To...

She paused. Why was she flying away...?

Just ‘cause that weird voice told her to? She didn’t have to listen to any weird voice! She looked around, but she found herself utterly lost in the void.

She couldn’t see the castle anywhere... How far had she fled?

Miranda let out a groan as she heard the door to her room opening. “I thought I was going to be left alone tonight.” She said weakly “Let me rest...”

“Well... We would...” Silvia replied “But we heard someone wasn’t getting her rest.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” Miranda lied.

“You’re not going to recover if you keep pushing yourself.” Silvia said, a concerned tone in her voice. “Just let yourself rest for tonight. The game hasn’t even begun, there’s nothing to worry about.”

“The game has begun.” Miranda said, struggling to sit up. “We need to... S-Solve the mystery of the castle...”

Silvia gently pressed Miranda back down onto the bed, raising her staff as it glowed once again. It wasn’t as strong this time, but Miranda could feel the pain in her being soothed once more.

“Eliza,” Silvia said gently “Could you bring us some water, and perhaps something light to eat.”

“Sure...” Eliza replied, “I’ll just be a minute...”

Miranda watched as Silvia took a seat next to her. “This really isn’t necessary.” She said again, “I was resting just fine.”

Silvia lifted a ghostly robe from the bed and held it up into Miranda’s field of view. “And this is here by coincidence?”

“I...” She began, but she knew she didn’t have any good excuse to use...

“Miranda. You were trying to coach Misty on doing your investigative work. Weren’t you?” Silvia said, her tone should have been accusatory, but... It felt gentle. Compassionate...

“Not... Coaching...” Miranda replied “Just... A little instruction...”

“There is no need for that.” Silvia said softly. “Misty will still be here in the morning. You don’t need to worry yourself about this tonight.”

“The sooner we solve this...” Miranda grumbled weakly, but before she could finish Eliza re-entered the room.

“I brought some water, and some dried fruits. They um... They have... Nutrients... Right?”

“That’ll do for now.” Silvia said gently. “Thank you, Eliza.”

“No problem...” Eliza replied “I hope it helps...”

“I’m sure it will. You can go back to our room. I’ll stay here tonight.”

“You really don’t need to-” Miranda began, but Silvia put a hand on her shoulder and she felt her will to argue melting away.

“Miranda. You’re going to drink some of this water. Eat some of these fruits, and you’re going to rest tonight. Okay?”

Slowly, Miranda sat up again, this time with Silvia’s approval. She accepted the glass of water and began to drink from it. Water had never tasted so... Satisfying before. Was it because she had been drained earlier?

After she had downed half the glass, she slowly began to take the dried fruits one piece at a time. It was difficult to chew... But it was nice to have something to eat again... She had slept through dinner.

Silvia offered her one piece of fruit at a time. At first she felt frustration that she couldn’t just grab the whole fistful and pour it into her mouth... But logically... She knew better.

After what she had been through, she needed to take it slowly. If she thought it was laborious to eat one fruit, she would never be able to chew a whole handful of them. She continued to pick at the fruits at the pace Silvia allowed, taking sips from her glass of water now and again until they were all gone.

Miranda laid back onto her pillow, and let out a slow sigh. “You can go back to your room.” She said gently “I won’t do any more work tonight.”

Silvia smiled gently and shook her head. “No. I’m taking care of you tonight. Just let yourself rest and don’t worry about a thing.”

“Fine...” Miranda relented with a sigh. In a way... It was nice to be taken care of... She was so used to being independent... It was actually a nice change of pace. Besides... Silvia was right. Misty would still be here in the morning. She didn’t have anything to worry about...