

Just Be

By Kaitlyn Pontious

It all began when my mom decided we should go out for a, uhm, shall we say once-in-a-blue-moon, mother/daughter outing. I'd never been to a spa before, so I had actually been quite excited. When we pulled into the full parking lot of luxury cars and Lexis' a bit of doubt began to play on my mind, but hey, my mom was a super-shopper. Bet she still is today. Anything she needed, she could find for cheaper, or if she couldn't, we did without.

She clicked into the front lobby of that building like the head of a lion pride. Her imitation Prada five-inchers and a faux Coach purse complimented Levi jeans with Louis Vuitton buttons sewn on. I remember standing there star-struck by just the entranceway view. Looking back, that auditorium-sized foyer should have sent me running for home.

But I didn't run. Instead, I stumbled like a newly born lamb toward the check-in counter where my mom was fluidly conversing with the guy at the desk. I couldn't even take in the "decadent-ness" of the place because I felt so awkward in my garage-sale AeroP and muddy trainers.

"Kat! Over here." My mom's voice broke through my reverie as she impatiently motioned me closer. "You see," she turned to the man, "this is my daughter, Katherine."

"Ew, mom," I tried to say. "Since when do you—"

"*Katherine* here is quite a fine lady." My mom's smile must have looked normal to the desk-man, because he didn't flinch. But I don't think I've ever seen anything quite as frightening in my life.

So I decided to play along and gave a super-sweet "Why, of course, mother," in response. Can you taste the gag? Anyways, the guy bought it and I stood there examining the decorations as the two talked about the plan for the day.

A bronze Athena had just caught my eye when Damien abruptly turned and my mom followed. I was a bit annoyed, but followed in hopes of a refreshing mud mask.

In all honesty, I couldn't tell you anything with real detail from that point on until we were in one of those steam rooms – other than the fact that it was relaxing (duh) and that the walls were brown. Well, that's a bit of a lie. I also remember that all of the staff members stared at us that day. At the time, I thought it was just because we weren't exactly the kind of customers I bet they were used to seeing. Especially me, who wasn't even dressed in phony designer goods. I know better now.

Well, as I said, my memory picks up in the steam-room. I only wanted to go in for a few seconds, just to see what it was like. What I did not know was that when I entered the small, opaque room, Damien would lock the door behind me. Nor did I know that my mom hadn't entered, or that staying in a steam room for too long can cause you to pass out.

As you can imagine, when I woke up in some dark velvety room in a giant canopy bed, I was quite surprised. I wasn't even given enough time to sit up and absorb my surroundings when Damien burst into the room. "Oh, good. You're awake. This way, then."

I just stared at him, perplexed by the lack of happiness in the "Oh, good." The way he'd said it, he sounded more like the evil headmistress in *Matilda* than someone happy to see me awake. Which had once again posed the question: *Where was I?*

This is where I'm going to fast-forward past a bit of the really creepy-ness that went on in that hallway. Cause frankly, I'd rather not think of what I saw there anymore. So basically, we burst into some extremely elegant dining room with gothic décor; ate at opposite ends of the ridiculously long table, and, without saying a word, returned to the room. *My room*, I was later told.

Now you're wondering what's going on. Really, I don't know all that well. Or rather, didn't know. At the time, I was so much more interested in getting out of the place than figuring why I was there. I did, however, glean some interesting tidbits in the first couple of days.

1. My mom was nowhere. And she wasn't going to come get me either, 'cause on the second day I spent there, Damien solemnly handed me a note. No, she wasn't dead. She was just . . . happy. She abandoned me so she could be happy. The note gave some nonsense about how the spa owner had been interested in her, and they decided to send me here – with my brother-in-law – while they went on their honeymoon. I still haven't read the whole thing. I just can't bring myself to do it.
2. Damien's name was actually "Lucifer." Or rather, that's what he called himself. He had it entirely in his head that he was the devil reincarnated. Way to pick a winner, mom.
 - a. Odd side note: he called me "Uriel" his "Little Angel." The first time he said it, I was kinda freaked. I admit it. But, after a while, I accepted it as my nickname. Just something about hearing it so many times, I guess.
3. Contrary to the dark interior (despite its plush-ness, places *do* get musty if you never open a window), the place wasn't underground. The one time I got close enough to a window, I received a breathtaking view from an eagle-eye vantage point of some barren wasteland. From what I've managed to extract from "Lucifer" (weeding out the "it's my domain's"), it's some private property they own in Texas. A huge private property. (And the interior is "Lucifer's" taste.)

I'll leave off there for now, because I just re-read this, and I realized that I left out some really key points that you might need (or want) to know.

First of all, my name is Katherine McMillan. Birthday: July 18th; 16 years old. I have long, curly blonde hair that never straightens correctly and really green eyes. Bio class taught us that recessive genes aren't supposed to surface over dominant ones, so I guess I'm an anomaly because mom and dad (from the pictures) both are true *morenos*. Moving on, I guess my height won't change . . . oh, my favorite food is mac and cheese. I love reading, my pet dog, "Flynn," hanging out with friends, and general merrymaking. God that makes me sound so up-there. Okay, shooting myself back down to Earth; I'm really, really, really sarcastic. And cynical. As if you couldn't tell by now. . .

Next, there's Damien/Lucifer. I still don't know all that much about him, 'cause every time I try to get close, he starts reminding me of Smeagol from The Lord of the Rings. It's not really that he's so creepy – I mean, if I wasn't so scared of him, I'd have to admit that his straight black hair and sharp eyes easily created the hot bad-boy look – it was just the whole "Uriel" thing. Which brings me back to the story.

It took me about a week to ask "Lucifer" a question. (I've been here for about a year now, btw.) Anyways, a week and a lot of self-pep. So, the first thing I asked him? "W-what's your name?" God, I felt so stupid. Literally, every time I remember that question, I have to do a facepalm. It was just that bad.

I guess that's what happens when you can't think straight and are scared enough to run from the room screaming. I swear, the guy's aura is menacing!

Luckily for me, I think he heard me wrong, 'cause he answered a different question.

"Lucifer," he grinned eerily, "is the fallen angel from the bible. And I am he."

In combination with my fear, this "revelation" of insane proportions made me head for the doors. But "Lucifer" barked "Sit down!" so I sat. On the floor. Yeesh. Anyways, he continued on to say something along the lines of "You know the basic story, right? About how I tried to rebel, but instead was thrown from Heaven? Well, at the time, you were supposed to join my rebellion. As my wife, that should have been your duty. But you were too afraid of losing."

That's the point where I was kinda like, "woah, woahh. Back up. Your wife??" But he ignored me and kept going, explaining how he let me stay, but I was punished for being married to him, etc.

Apparently, my punishment riled him up because he then started ranting about ". . . how *dare* He turn you into a human! A pathetic, spineless human with no sense of her importance! Be gone!" At that point, I'd had about enough and did exactly as he'd said to do; I got up to leave. But when I was about halfway through the door, a pathetic voice rasped from behind. "Wait, don't go! My Little Angel, don't leave me. Help me with my revenge! . . ." I didn't hear the rest because by that time, I was well away from his royal phycotic-ness.

I made it back to my room in one piece, but bits of what "Lucifer" said kept playing in my mind. I kept turning his words over, despite the fact that I was 100% sure it was just mad ramblings.

Maybe I haven't made it clear, but the guy is crazy. I've seen him mumbling in the hallways and when he talks to me, he seems almost bipolar. I don't know how many times I've tried to get away from him, but I'm a social person. The fact that there was no one else to talk to kept me going back, even as he scared me away. So really, I was taking his words with a "grain of salt."

Anyways, thinking so much wasn't my style, so I decided to go on another "tour" around the building. After the 20th fruitless attempt, I returned to my room, where I was accosted by "Lucifer" again. This time, he was rambling about a ritual to return my memories to me.

As I said earlier, that was about a year ago. Throughout this past year, I've pretty much repeated the same events: I've listened to more "divine" history lessons; rejected his attempts at restoring my memory; asked more pointless questions; and wandered over and over again to find an escape (that apparently doesn't exist.) So this morning – in an irritated lack of sleep – I finally agreed.

At the time, I thought it would be totally worth it, just to get "Lucifer" to shut up and let me go home (how long is a honeymoon anyways?) But now I'm feeling a little worried. It wouldn't surprise me at all if he tried some black magic out of a musty old book or something. I mean, it's not like I believe in magic . . . but there's nothing wrong with just-in-cases.

So this is my "just in case." Just in case I lose my memory. Or die. (If that happens, I love you mom. And would have loved you more if you didn't up and leave me here.) Or something else that I really don't want to think about because it's not going to happen! Yeah.

I have to go now. "Lucifer's" at the door. Why did I get myself into this??

1st journal entry. Hopefully not my last,
Katherine McMillan