

## Chapitre 1 : A very special day

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Publié sur [Fanfiction.fr](https://www.fanfiction.fr).

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As the sun was rising, a morning breeze was quietly settling in, it was coming through the half-open window that Chise had left open on purpose the day before so as not to be too hot. A few hours later, she came out of her sleep. It must have been around 10 am (she had gone to bed late the day before to study the spells).

After a little yawn she tenderly caressed Ruth's head which was right next to her, present for her awakening.

They both walked down the stairs to the kitchen where they spotted Silky happily finishing preparing breakfast.

Chise stepped back to look around the living room, but to her surprise Elias was not there as usual reading the newspaper or a book in the armchair while waiting for his beloved to wake up.

Slightly worried Chise asked Silky if she had seen Elias this morning, she nodded and pointed to the floor. Reassured, she rushed to the stairs and once upstairs, slowly walked towards Elias' room. A little

embarrassed she knocked on the door 3 times and asked:

-E... Elias, are you there?

- ...

No answer

But as she tried to lean on the door, hoping to hear some noise that would signify her presence,

the door opened suddenly and Chise found herself lying on the floor. Luckily she hadn't hurt herself.

The room was empty and the curtains were open. Curious, she looked at her and stopped on the small chest of drawers that Elias had next to his bed because she saw a small note. She bent down to pick it up and saw the message he had left her:

-Good morning Chise, if I'm not here this morning, don't worry! I had to make a last-minute delivery to bring a remedy to a neighboring village. I will be back as soon as possible.

Elias

After becoming aware of the events, Chise was reassured and breathed a small sigh of relief. She joined Ruth and Silky and quietly ate her breakfast which had been prepared beforehand. Once finished she made a program for the morning. She had to go help Silky in the garden to look after the vegetable garden and the flowers. The morning air was mild and the warmth of the sun was pleasant. After about an hour and a half they were finally finished and Chise went home to wash up a little.

Noon was approaching and Elias was still not back yet. Chise, worried, decided that after lunch she would go looking for him because some bell was ringing for her. She could not know it, but she could feel it.

- "It shouldn't take so long".

she says to herself.

-He said he would be back soon but it's past noon!

She sat at the table with Ruth and Silky who had carefully prepared the meal as usual. It was stuffed tomatoes with a little sauce made from the vegetables from the garden. Chise swallowed

her plate and once finished, began to get ready to go and fetch Elias who still hadn't returned.

[-Flashback-]

(Elias' point of view the day before)

-Mr. Ainsworth, a strange magical creature has appeared in a neighboring village. It feeds off scenes that frighten people by taking on a familiar appearance and mentally tortures them in ways they can never imagine. Nobody knows what she looks like because everyone perceives her differently. I am asking you, not for personal reasons, but for the sake of the village to come and get rid of it.

Sincerely, Simon.

Here is the letter Elias received that morning. Even as a human being, Simon was what we could call "friends" for us, so he decided to help them as much as he could.

-This creature is too dangerous for the moment, it is better that I don't tell Chise about it, I don't want to put her in danger for nothing.

he said to himself after much reflection, although he did not like to lie. But in this sense it was to preserve his apprentice. He decided to leave the next day at dawn before he woke up, leaving a small letter of apology to justify his absence. He left a small letter of apology to justify his absence and told Silky not to inform Chise of the real reason. He thought of ending it quickly but everything did not go as planned...

[-Return to the present]-

Chise swallowed her plate and once finished, began to get ready to fetch Elias who hadn't returned yet." She went up to her office, took her wand, her jacket and her "magic fur" that eye of ashes had left her at their first meeting although she was not the best. Once downstairs, she gave Silky a little help and waved goodbye as Ruth also accompanied her.

The gentle wind waving her hair and Ruth's long hair was comforting.

so that they can begin their research. Chise put on her fur to transform herself into a wolf, on the spot which was the most appropriate animal for her on this mission. She and Ruth split up to search on their own to cover a larger area. She hoped to find Elijah as soon as possible and tried to think with all her heart that nothing had happened to her. They both went their own way, following bumpy paths, climbing small mountains, crossing fields and lakes but unfortunately after a good three hours of searching they had no leads.

Ruth and Chise met in a nearby forest. They were exhausted but Chise was far from wanting to stop there! It was already the middle of the afternoon and they had not found anything. She explained to Ruth that everything was fine, she was going to continue the search for a while and in the meantime he could go home to rest. He did so, and Chise, in human form, had taken off his fur to continue on foot.

Even under the shade of the trees, it was hot and she couldn't walk any more. That wind that was so light just now was gone and had turned into a stifling heat. After a good hour she was about to reluctantly give up hoping to see him again when she got home. As she was about to turn back, a distant howl was heard and many birds flew in the opposite direction. Deep inside her, Chise was convinced that Elias was connected to her! She used her last strength to run towards the shrill sound she had heard a few seconds before.

The closer she got, the more the vegetation seemed to be "burnt, mouldy" until brambles began to make their appearance. At that moment Chise was sure it was Elias but something was wrong. What could have happened?

As she got closer, the atmosphere became heavy and heavy like a feeling she could not explain at the time because it was indescribable, like a mixture of uneasiness and anger. As she advanced, the trees had fallen, lacerated by claw marks. Her pulse was increasing, which made her more and more worried.

Finally, what was bound to happen happened! Elias stood there in front of her in her monstrous form, and hearing her growling he was very angry but he had his back to her so he couldn't see her, being too concerned with his prey. Chise hid behind a tree that miraculously stood still to observe the terrible scene unfolding before her. With more attention she saw a silhouette below Elijah but could not distinguish it properly because he was standing in front of her. Suddenly, he opened his large jaw full of teeth and blood was already flowing, to bite the victim's leg with all his strength and then he threw it violently to the right. A few seconds later a loud scream was heard, which made Chise, who was watching this horrible scene, shudder for a moment.

The silhouette struggled as hard as she could and managed to make Elias tilt backwards for a moment, although in this form he was much more imposing. The look of this creature crossed Chise's gaze for a fraction of a second with a smirk for her great misfortune. This creature was actually the one Elias was supposed to get rid of from the village by Simon's request. On this fraction of second, the evil creature scanned the spirit of Chise in order to perceive her greatest fears and she found it! By the time Chise had time to understand anything, the creature had taken the appearance of her best friend: Stella (who was not actually physically). Under this appalling scene Chise came out and froze her eyes wide open and full of tears. She then cried with all her strength:

-E-ELIAS... THAT... WHAT ARE YOU DOING MY GOD! RELEASE STELLA IMMEDIATELY! YOU MONSTER!

This form was not easily controllable by Elias but when he turned around, he could never forget the expression of terror that Chise expressed nor the words she had just uttered.

-For the first time Elias had frightened Chise.

On the spot, he understood only half the situation because he couldn't guess what Chise was seeing because everyone perceived the creature in a different form but on the other hand he thought that his monstrosity and this horrible scene frightened him. But a misunderstanding crossed his mind when she mentioned the name Stella. Panic-stricken, he took the creature in his mouth and started to run away from Chise.

Chise, still frozen and crying and not understanding what had just happened, fell to her knees and cried even more than she already was.

Several minutes passed and she was still there, wondering what had just happened.

-W...why me, why did he do this? What was the reason? Stella was my best friend SHE DID NOT DESERVE HER!

In a fit of anger she decided to run away and never go back home to be with Elias who she now

called a monster.

[-Flashback-]

(Elias' point of view earlier in the day)

We were the next day and as planned Elias was going to carry out the task of getting rid as much as possible of the creature that Simon had mentioned in his letter the day before. As dawn broke, he began to get ready, he put on his pretty suit and the necklace that Chise had given him for Christmas, he would not part with it for anything in the world. After having had breakfast prepared in advance by Silky for him, he left the house making as little noise as possible so as not to disturb Chise. An hour and a half walk awaited him at his destination. When he came out, he sniffed the fresh morning air and started on his way. He took advantage as much as he could to observe the plants and listen to the birds chirping early in the morning. When he finally arrived at his destination after his long walk, he saw Simon waiting for him in the distance and waved his hand. He then walked towards him to greet him.

[Elias]-Hello Simon, how are you today?

Simon replied with a serious expression:

[Simon]-I could be better, but come on.

let's enter this house we can discuss the events more quietly.

Elias nodded his head to make him understand that he agreed and they entered the house that Simon had shown a few seconds earlier.

[Simon]-Go on in

he said, pointing to the chair with his fingertip.

[Simon]-Shall I serve you some tea?

he asked as he began to pull out two cups. In spite of the breakfast he had eaten about an hour before, Elias accepted his request out of politeness. When he had finished, Simon placed a small porcelain cup in front of him, still smoking, with that pleasant tea smell floating in the air. He took a seat on the chair in front of him, and always with a serious air he said:

Elias, I implore you, find a way to get rid of this creature, in this village nobody knows what it looks like and many people suffer psychologically and physically. Please really do everything you can to help them.

With a dubious but determined look, Elias nodded and then got up from his armchair when he hadn't finished Simon's cup of tea yet. As he walked through the door, he said to him:

[Elias]-Don't worry, everything is going to be all right.

he said to Simon in a calm and confident voice.

Then Elias began his search for the mysterious creature that terrified the village. Midday was approaching and he still hadn't finished his mission.

Elias]-I hope Chise is not too worried, I told her that I would return quickly. I would tell him that I had a setback.

The creature, she was discreetly observing from a distant corner this sorcerer who had been looking for her for quite a while.

Not being aware of his true strength, she decided to hand him over, which for her would seem like a trap. After having read her thoughts, she took the appearance of Chise. She came out of

her hiding place and started to walk, humming a little melody. A few minutes later, Elias, attracted by this sound, turned his head in a reflex and there he saw something he never thought he would see here.

-[ IT WAS SHIT! ] -

He still didn't believe it and rubbed his eyes frantically with his two white gloves but nothing to do, Chise was there and she seemed happy to walk under this soft sun.

[Elias]-Chise, what are you doing here?! How did you find me? It's dangerous here, I told you not to worry though!

What for him was like Chise stopped dead and turned his head slightly with a small smile. She laughed and started to move away in the direction of the nearby forest whispering:

-Eliaaass, come find me, I am alone,

-Why did you lie to me? I thought we had to share everything now.

-Eliaaass

All these whisperings resounded in his head and he decided to go after "Chise" while being in the incomprehension of the situation. She was running unusually fast while repeating certain words that were very unpleasant to listen to Elias, such as :

- "lies", "abandoned", "betrayal", "betrayal".

He didn't understand and couldn't stand to hear all her, and above all why she was running like her? Laughing from time to time with small laughter that seemed provocative. After about ten



minutes of running, the creature stopped and at the same time Elias stopped dead.

[Elias]-Ch...Chise, I can explain it all to you, please don't get angry, it...it was too dangerous and I didn't want to put you in danger....

[Creature/Chise]:

[Creature]- You got a big mouth, big boy, I know you tried to betray me by lying to me, and I'm sure it's not the first time...

Elias was in shock. But the fake Chise didn't waste a minute to cast a spell and that's when he really understood who it was. In front of him, stood in reality the creature he had to take care of and she had taken the appearance of his beloved: Chise! Against his heart he would have to beat against this evil creature who had taken the appearance of his wife and this idea gave him a chill, but he had no choice. Then, as they began a merciless fight, which at the beginning was just a simple spell, Elias quickly understood that he couldn't win so easily and unfortunately had to take his monstrous form hoping that he wouldn't lose control. In this form he clearly had the upper hand with his strength and bramble powers. While the creature was on the ground, Elias rushed at it to rip its arm off with a sharp blow; this vision of dismembering Chise made him feel such intense pain inside even though he knew for sure that it wasn't her. He shouted; what would look like sadness to us (a shout that will alert Chise later).

A few minutes went by and this time Chise was finished with this usurping Chise, she was no longer able to move. Once again, while refraining from shouting, he tore off her leg and threw her violently to the right. And with its last strength, the demonic creature tilted Elijah slightly backwards. And it is at this moment that he heard Chise screaming behind him (during his fight he had not perceived her with his magic).

No doubt, and he felt it instantly, it was the real Chise who was standing there, in front of him and watching this horrible scene. The words she shouted didn't have a direct effect on him because he was less lucid in this form but still, recognizing Chise in this form of panic and despair, took the creature in his mouth and ran in the opposite direction without asking himself any questions. During his run, he remembered the words she had spoken, stumbled for a moment on the fact that she was evoking Stella until he understood that the creature had taken on the appearance of his best friend to make him believe in this massacre.

Elias, shocked and angry as ever, tore to pieces what was left of the creature.

-[Return to the Present]-

"In a fit of anger she decided to run away and never return to be with Elijah, whom she now called a monster."

Chise, full of tears, quickly put on her fur and started to run at full speed.

She didn't know where she was going, and she didn't care! The important thing for her was to get as far away as possible and find a place to spend the night. On the way she threw away the pendant that Elias had given her on the day she came, she wouldn't need it now. It was late afternoon and the evening was not long in coming. She kept running, all tearful and kept telling herself that it was not possible and that Elias couldn't have done such a thing, but she had seen everything with her own eyes, so for her it was the harsh reality. It had been two hours since she had started running and she was exhausted, on top of that it was getting dark. Luckily for her, she soon came across a water point with a waterfall that made this place a very nice landscape and luckily a small cave was hidden behind it. So Chise decided to stay here to spend the night because it was too dangerous to sleep in the open air.

She was deeply saddened by what happened earlier in the afternoon and still didn't believe it. Cowering on herself at the bottom of the small cave she cried again. The one who had finally accepted her as she was, who had given her a home and everything she needed, had just committed an irreversible act. She also thought of Ruth and Silky who would be sad to no longer be there, but she thought it was better like that because she was hurting everyone she was with. Exhausted from her long day and the tragic events, when night had just fallen she quickly fell asleep although the place was not the most comfortable. The sound of the waterfall was soothing and the darkness of the night was slightly broken by the moonlight, which that evening was particularly intense.

[-Flashback-]

(Elias' point of view when he ran away)

Once the creature was completed, Elias tried his best to return to his "original form" before

completely losing control. Now he had only one concern:

[ JOIN CHISE! ]

The words she had uttered still resonated in his head, it hurt him but on the other hand he was totally understanding of the situation she had been exposed to. So he decided to go home and try to talk calmly to explain the misunderstanding. After a long walk, he arrived at the doorstep breathing in the humid night air that was about to fall.

He pushed the handle on the door and pushed it open, he exclaimed:

-I'm home!

To his surprise, Ruth and Silky were both waiting in front of the door but did not seem to be happy at all.

Elias then began:

[Elias]-I...I'll explain it to all of you...

[Ruth]-Where's Silky!?

Ruth cried,

[Ruth]-She's not with you?

Surprised, Elias replied:

How is that? She hasn't returned?

Ruth, in an exasperated tone, sighed.

Ruth]-Pfff, already when you come home late it has to be without her too.

Don't you have any way to reach her?

[Elias]-I'm not picking up her signal, it's not normal, I hope nothing serious has happened to her.

[Ruth]-My connection to her is very weak but I can only slightly perceive it as a form of infinitesimal sadness and disgust, what else has happened?

Elias]-We don't have time, I'll explain on the way. Let's go !

He nodded his head and they both went in search of Chise.

On the way Elias told Ruth the whole story in detail.

[Elias]-And that's what happened... at least from what I understood and now she must have run away for sure!

[Ruth]-We're in trouble here, I hope you can explain it to her calmly without her running away from you.

said Ruth with a little sigh.

[Ruth]-She's still far away and the link is really very weak but important enough for me to follow it.

[Elias]-Yes, let's continue.

Elias nodded.

-[Return to the Present]-

While Chise was sleeping soundly, a loud thud coming from outside woke her up. She jumped and rubbed her eyes before looking outside and for the second time of the day, she saw something horrible.

Some kind of monster that looked like a gigantic water monster had just crushed a doe and her mother who were passing by. As he bent down to start devouring them, Chise let out a little cry despite her hands which she had put in front of her mouth to avoid attracting attention. The monster suddenly turned around because he had picked up the sound made by the girl a few seconds earlier and stood up in front of her with his whole body. It was too much for Chise, she was about to crack after all that had happened to her today.

She was taken out of her thoughts by the enormous roar of the creature that was right in front of her. Chise couldn't take it anymore. What would be the point of her staying alive now? The most precious thing she had was taken from her again. Deep down she thought that it wasn't so bad that she died because now nobody wanted her in this world.

As the monster lifted up what looked like a leg, Chise did not offer any resistance. With a last sigh, she closed her eyes and in spite of her tears that were beginning to flow, she thought that still, she was able to be happy with a few people for a period of her life.

Now that she was finished with her, the monster violently lowered his paw towards Chise but at

the same time a voice that seemed quite distant but close to her reached her ears.

[Elias]-CHISE, NO! I PRAY TO YOU!

It was the voice of Elias! Hardly had she had time to strike, that unconsciously she unconsciously shifted as she could to the left, but that was not enough to completely dodge the violent strike of the monster. She was thrown into the air just above the lake but just in time Ruth received her in her arms before she fainted from the shock. Meanwhile Elias took the time to scare the creature away, which compared to him was not powerful at all.

A few minutes later Chise woke up, she was a little sore from her glide and had a few scratches.

Above her stood Ruth, who was worried sick.

[Chise]-Oh Ruth, is that you? What are you doing here?

Thank you for saving me.

she said with a sigh of relief.

[Ruth]-Don't worry, I'm here for this, I'm your familiar after all. But it's not me you have to thank, it's him.

he said, pointing to Elias who was pacing around waiting for Chise to wake up.

She turned her head and saw him looking somewhat embarrassed and full of questions.

But it didn't last long when he saw the terrorized expression Chise was expressing again.

[Chise]-R...Ruth we have to leave quickly! He is in fact only a monster... !

[Ruth]-NO, Chise, you'll have to calm down, okay?

Ruth asked calmly with a look full of kindness.

Chise]-But...But S..Stella is... Stella es....

she said tearfully, which made a pinch in the heart of Elias who saw her in that state.

[Ruth]-Stella is not dead and she is fine, don't worry. You just need to calm down and listen carefully, will you?

Chise replied doubtfully:

[Chise]-It's...it's okay.

She looked at Elijah, who looked somewhat anxious, out of the corner of her eye as she sat down beside Ruth. And that's when he began to tell his story.

At the end Elijah said to her in a somewhat pained voice:

[Elias]-I'm really sorry, I didn't mean to frighten you, sorry.

Chise felt extremely guilty about her stupid reaction at the time because she didn't even know about the situation. Basically, she still noticed Elias' detached and confused look. As she was about to ask him what was wrong, she remembered the horrible words she had said about him.

Suddenly she cried out in tears in his arms:

Forgive me, Elias, I am... I AM SO SORRY, PLEASE FORGIVE ME!

Her warmth was comforting, but Elias, somewhat surprised, still asked her what she was sorry about.

Chise, wiping away her tears told him that it was out of anger and misunderstanding, she had spoken too quickly.

[Elias]-So you didn't really mean what you said? I'm not a monster to you?

he asked with a look that seemed full of questions.

[Chise]-Of course not! You're not! I'm so sorry I expressed myself that way, excuse me again!

Elias replied seriously:

[Elias]-Chise, you're my humanity teacher, aren't you? So I would like you to tell me more about how I felt. It was... how can I put it, I felt very bad and those words that resounded in my head I didn't want to say anymore.

never hear them!

[Chise]-Humm... how should I put it? I think you felt hurt because...



Elias cut him off

[Elias]-Oh well I see, "wounded"? But I don't have any marks or scratches.

[Chise]-I meant wounded from the inside, at the level of your heart you certainly felt sad and it was most probably unpleasant for you, wasn't it?

she said, pointing her finger at Elias' chest.

He nodded his head,

[Elias]-Well, I have to admit that yes, I must have felt hurt like you say and it's an extremely unpleasant feeling. I wouldn't want that to happen again for anything in the world. But now that you are here, I feel warm and good.

he said, gently rubbing the tip of his snout on Chise's sparkling red hair.

[Elias]-Where's your pendant, by the way?

Chise, somewhat embarrassed, answered him:

[Chise]-Well, in my run I dropped it because I didn't want you to find me, BUT I don't think about that now. Excuse me again, that was a precious gift you gave.

To apologize, she suggested that once they got home they could sleep together to get to know each other better. Elias, who did not immediately understand the substance of this statement,

accepted Chise's proposal without hesitation. (She had in mind to detail to him more deeply the feelings that he could feel and which are not always easy to explain).

Despite the late hour, the three of them went home. When she walked through the door with Elias and Ruth, Silky threw herself into Chise's arms. She had kindly prepared a good dinner. At last they were all together and enjoyed their meal.

Elias, sitting on the edge of the bed, turned his head when he saw Chise open the door of his room in her dressing gown and waving shyly. When Elijah lay down, he turned his head toward Chise and asked her:

Elias]-When you came back earlier, seeing you like this made me very happy, and your presence warms me, I appreciate it very much,

how would you translate this into your language?

Chise got a little closer to Elias and he

addressed a small kiss on the muzzle before giving him some caresses on the top of the skull.

[Chise]- And there? Did you feel anything?

Elias answered very happily:

[Elias]- Yes, I felt as if I had a little tickle in my belly. Is that normal?

Lying down in turn and while getting closer to him, Chise said to him with a mischievous and happy look at the same time:

Chise]-Look, I can't really explain to you if it's normal, but in any case, it seems to be the closest thing to compassion, or even love, to love Elias.

(In Elias' head)

-Love?

she whispered just before closing her eyes, being closer than ever to the person she was now sure she loved.

?End

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