

Alejandrina Aragon
621 Grape Street
El Cajon, CA 92021
(619) 333-9774
avaragon81@outlook.com

about 700 words

SUNDAY FUNDAY

By Alejandrina Aragon

I love Sundays, but this one was better than most. It was the last day of October, my favorite holiday and the best season of the year. There's something so nostalgic about it. Who doesn't like the crunch of copper leaves beneath their feet and the intoxicating smell of pumpkin mixed with the fall breeze? Not to mention all the extravagant costumes, they just keep getting better and better every year. Or so I thought.

I was balls deep in *Elvira, Mistress of The Dark* with Midnight purring away on my lap when I heard a rap on the door. He's not a skittish cat, but he hissed like he was startled. And the sun was still out, so neither of us were too fond of the interruption. "Trick or treaters never come this early, do they Midnight?" I asked, as he bolted beneath the couch.

And I was so comfortable that I refused to get up, so I paused my movie and shouted out, "Who is it?" without budging. But nothing. "Ugh," I said as I forced myself up to see who it was. "Hello? Is anyone there?" I said, peeking through the keyhole. But the only response was an eerie silence, accompanied by the wrestling of fall leaves in the distance. It sounded like they were trying to tell me something, warn me perhaps, but leaves don't speak. So, I looked again, but all I could see was the Sunset on the horizon. Then the knob rattled, and there was a thud against the door. "This isn't funny," I said as I fumbled with the chain lock.

I cracked the door with it in place, to get a better view, but no one was there, just a box. "That's weird, there's no mail on Sundays. Damn teenagers. Too old to dress up, but too young to take anything seriously," I said, shaking my head. I unlatched the lock and flung the door open to see if I could catch a glimpse of the prankster, but no one was there, just the box. So, I picked it up and tried to shake it, but it was too heavy, and whatever was inside, didn't have much room to move around in there.

I brought it inside and placed it on the coffee table. I turned off my movie marathon and put on the news while investigating because there's nothing worse than dead silence. So, I started peeling off the tape, but something stopped me in my tracks. My foot felt wet all of a sudden. *Did I spill something?* I looked to see what it was when Midnight popped his head out from under the couch and licked it. It was a dark, thick, reddish brown substance, and it reeked of rot. "Eww, Midnight! What the hell is that? Don't lick it!" I said, pushing him aside. I proceeded to open the first flap, but an obnoxious alert sounded from an emergency broadcast.

"This is Aurora Sandoval with WBS breaking news. We received word from local authorities that there is a serial killer on the loose. A six o'clock curfew is in effect until further notice. Lock up, stay put, and do not answer the door. We've had several missing person reports

and anonymous packages showing up on porches all around town. Please be advised that these boxes contain gruesome remains. If you receive one, do not open it! Instead, contact your local law enforcement agency immediately!" she pleaded.

My body trembled in shock as I dialed nine-one-one. Blood seeped through the box's crevices, and the cardboard began to sag. And it fell apart as the operator took my report. A decapitated head rolled out, landing on my feet, and Midnight started swiping at it like a ball of yarn, as I screamed for dear life.

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