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English A - Ms. Coggins

Form 2F

## An Unexpected Twist

"Ma Pearl," I murmured "Can I hear a story?"

"Yes child" was her response

My grandmother's usual grimace was replaced with a huge jaunty smile. I was her only grandchild and she delighted in regaling me with tales, of West-Indian folklore. I forced a smile in return. I heard almost all of the folklore tales. I usually just tried to placate her by asking for these stories. "Oh so you want to hear a story?" she grinned "Well I have a new one for you." I glanced at her suddenly sanguine. Maybe this won't be as boring as I expected. With a clearing of the throat she began.

"This is the story of the old hag, though you may know her as the soucouyant. She is a sanguinary creature who sold her soul to the devil." And so she commenced:

"There was once a young lady named Marla. She lived with her father and grandmother, who moved in with Marla and her father after her daughter's untimely demise. Marla was a pretty looking girl; a sylph. She was dainty, with piercing eyes and a face of an angel. She was fifteen years old. The boys all liked her." I could not understand how this could ever be a folklore tale, however I still listened intently. "There was this one boy, Steve, a sycophantic young lad. He wooed her with expensive gifts. It was superfluous though, she had already taken a shine to him.

"She had only one problem. Her father would never allow her on a date until she was eighteen. She showed obeisance toward her father but she still dated Steve. Now one -

"Ma" I interrupted "How can this possibly be relevant in a folklore tale."

"Patience Brenda, you'll see," she then continued. "Now one morning Marla awoke and found bruises on her skin. She was terrified. Like all Trinidadians she had all the horror stories.

"She found more every morning, but she kept it to herself, she was too embarrassed to tell anyone about it. One day though, her father saw some of the marks on her neck. He asked her about the marks his ire exploded when she didn't reply. He yelled at her, impetuously jumping to conclusions. The bruise-like marks, which faintly resembled the results of affection, infuriated him. He was a grandiose man and the ignominy of people viewing his daughter as coquettish made him grimace. Marla held out her hand to stop his rant.

"Daddy honestly, I admit I was dating Steve," he gritted his teeth at that "but I really, truly do not know where these marks are coming from," she said pointing at the various marks. "I wake up every morning with more." Her father was suddenly bereft of anger, confusion taking its place.

"Throna, Marla's grandmother, entered the living room after hearing the argument.

"Is every thing all right Albert?" she asked Marla's dad. After Albert related the story, Throna said "Hhhmmmm." After a long pause she said "Okay." Albert stared at Throna, chagrined; her apathy was atypical. Throna then left the room apparently unconcerned. Albert looked at her then directed his glare towards Marla. He barked concealed his sarcasm as he said "Okay then. Tonight I'll stay in your room and see where you get these 'marks' from"

"Later that night at exactly twelve o'clock, Albert, in Marla's room, heard a noise. At that very moment Marla's bedroom window flew up

Albert took an infinitesimal step towards the door. It was a macabre sight; a giant ball of fire that looked like the sun, floating towards Marla. He froze for a quarter of a second and impetuously threw salt at this miniature sun, that shockingly produced no heat. He was suddenly grateful. Grateful of his daughter's cognizance of the crux in the story of the soucouyant. Grateful that she remembered that as the old hag leaves her skin to transform into an animal or a great fire ball she must shed her human skin. That she remembered throwing salt on her skin or the fire ball (or animal) will prevent her from reentering her skin and she would eventually die. A loud shriek escaped from the bulb of yellow fire, in obvious pain 'she' flew straight out of the window into the night. For one night, the moon and sun merged together as the sun finally disappeared.

Albert took a deep breath, then he sighed. He looked at his daughter, who was languidly cowering into her pillows. Sobs escaped from her chest as she remembered her father's laudable actions. He held his daughter for an hour and she drifted into unconsciousness. Albert, ridiculously sangfroid, then left his daughter to rest, confident that the soucouyant could not, would not return. He then decided to check in on Throna. He peeked into her room surprised when he found her bed empty. He frantically searched the room for her. He gasped in horror as he saw his mother-in-law's empty skin, strewn across the floor, next to her bed....."

"It was her grandmother." I gasped in awe

"Marla sort of reminds me of you, you know Bren." Ma said  
"Why?" was my apropos response

She smiled darkly "This is why." she whispered ominously as she sank into a crouch shedding her skin. I screamed in horror

as my grandmother transformed into a great ball of sunlight. I had no salt to protect me. All I could do was watch as she drifted further and further towards me, desperate for my blood.

✓ This is an excellent story with a tremendous ending. Keep it up.