

Reunion Time

High school reunions, or any reunion for that matter, really suck. People go to extreme measures to prepare for them; weight loss, new hair styles, spending ridiculous amounts of money on a dress or suit that deep down you know you're only going to wear once. What's all of it for anyway? To spend hours sitting with boring people, looking at pictures of babies that you secretly think are ugly but have to say are cute, and eating lousy food? It's truly not worth it. However, whatever it may be, reunion attendees try their hardest to do anything they feel is necessary to give their fellow reunion goers the impression that they've been doing fine and dandy since graduation.

Not for our special guests though. Our special guests simply emerge from the darkest corners of -- well everywhere really -- and they seem to simply appear at the reunion. Once at said reunion, they try to blend in with the crowd and be seemingly normal. Little do they know that everyone, even if it's in peripheral vision, has their eyes locked on these honorary guests. As of now, they can be seen leaning against the bar with very different expressions on their face. The first honorary attendee wears a blank

expression and looks to be just simply done with everything. The other two are quite spritely and ecstatic, eager to see their beloved friends again. “Poor Beth is nearly popping out of her dress. I’m surprised her buttons haven’t flown off yet!” says the guest in the middle.

“No one looks fat when they’re dead,” retorts the scowling guest.

“Johnny’s children are so ugly, I bet if I had children they would look much better than that,” says the guest on the far right, ignoring the buzzkill response.

“All children look peaceful when they’re dead,” replied the grim guest again.

The joyful attendees keep up their gossip and idle chit-chat as the first guest becomes annoyed and moves away from the other two. “Pests,” he mutters as he turns away. He retreats to the far left corner, as far away from anything and everything as possible, yet he is everywhere. He is dressed in an extremely old and grey cloak. It might as well be tattered rags terribly sewn together in great rush. The hooded cloak covers everything about our guest, his face included. Even if the cloak wasn’t hooded you wouldn’t see his face; there isn’t one to be seen. Under the poorly sewn rag-cloak is complete

darkness. The only sign of color anywhere on our guest was a traditional red and white nametag; it wouldn't be any different from the others if it weren't for the name inscribed upon it. "HELLO MY NAME IS: Death".

Death is all too familiar with those attending the reunion; he was especially familiar with those who weren't. He had taken them long ago. Janie Butler, Beau Kuts, Alice Raynden, Tammy Peaks, and Ray Johnson are the young souls that Death claimed many years ago. Janie and Tammy were involved in a head-on collision with Beau. The impact killed Tammy and Beau instantly, and Janie's soul was snatched only an hour later.

Ray Johnson's bright soul was stolen during a baseball game. A bat accidentally thrown by the opposing team hit him in the chest and broke two ribs, fracturing another. The fractured rib was pushed inward by the force of the bat and impaled his heart. He bled out from the inside. Death almost didn't want to take Ray's soul; he had such a beautiful life ahead of him. Alice Raynden was a cancer case. Death welcomed her.

For now, we're going to leave our first guest and introduce you to the second. This guest is far more outgoing than our first, yet so much more dimwitted. Guest number two walks around in an outfit as fitting and

covering as much as a morph suit. It's quite an odd outfit. One half of their attire is a reddish-pink that is abruptly cut off by a thick, black, zigzagging line down the middle, and then cuts back to the reddish-pink. This guest's bizarre attire wouldn't lead you to believe who it is, but the name is printed right there on the red and white nametag. "HELLO MY NAME IS: Heartbreak".

As anyone would believe, Heartbreak is acquainted with just about anyone and everyone imaginable. She visited quite regularly with each of the reunion goers and she was very fond of them. Although she's visited so many people, the story of one boy is always on her mind. The boy's name was Seth Acres.

Heartbreak first visited Seth as a sophomore. His girlfriend of two years had broken up with him because she didn't love him anymore. She found him in the middle of the hallway, where he stood dumbfounded while everyone else just pushed past him and continued on to their classes. Upon seeing him, Heartbreak enveloped him and did not let go. She clung to Seth almost for her life and she would have stayed there forever if it weren't for

his next girlfriend. They didn't last nearly half as long as the other one but he fell just as hard. Guess who was there to catch him? That's right, Heartbreak.

This process repeated over and over, well into Seth's college years. Heartbreak visited him so often that she almost began to love him. The irony, right? Heartbreak, loving? Ha. The cycle finally ended when he met the woman soon to become Mrs. Seth Acres. Because of the future Mrs. Acres, Heartbreak had to leave Seth. Even now at this very moment as she stands watching the Acres talking and enjoying this lively event, she wishes she never had to let go of him. Not even the first time.

Heartbreak's story is nearly over, as well as Death's, but not quite. Plus, we still have one more guest to introduce. Our third and final honorary guest is suited in a bright yellow tuxedo and practically floats around the reunion boasting about anything and everything. This guest is very bold and loves to brag. One might think they were Selfishness or Snobby but the traditional red and white nametag placed in the very center of their chest reads something else: "HELLO MY NAME IS: **PRIDE**".

Pride is definitely the most annoying, outrageous, obnoxious, and perhaps flamboyant of our guests. Pride is acquainted with many, but not as

many as Heartbreak. He is most affiliated with jocks, players, snobs, the usual. This boy could probably be Pride's best friend since they used to spend hours on end together. The only time they would separate was in his sleep, sometimes not even then. Pride would visit him in his dreams. They still spend a lot of time with each other, just not as much. This boy I speak of is Brent Handrip, the jock of the century, king of the school (and world in his mind), ruler of all. Brent carried around Pride like he was even more important than himself. That's almost all he was: pride, muscle, and letterman jackets.

After graduation things came to an immediate halt for Brent and he simply had nothing to be prideful about. Unfortunately and very reluctantly, Pride left him. Although they were very close, there is now a subtle distance between the two of them. They will never admit to anyone that they miss each other; they're both too stubborn.

It is now that you learn the reason our special guests are each very peculiar, yet equally important. Whether you have realized it by now or not, all of our guests are a physical representation of what every person has felt at least once in their life. Death has taken someone each of us has somehow

known. Perhaps you have even wished for him to come and steal you away.

Dark, sly and even persuasive at times, Death comes for us all.

You don't have to fall in love in order to be visited by Heartbreak, as she is fond of almost everyone. She'll even visit people for no reason whatsoever. No matter who you are, Heartbreak will see you one day, and if you're unlucky enough she'll fall in love with you.

Finally, Pride. He may come in small doses or entire shiploads but you will see him too one day. If you're not careful, he'll eat you up. His coaxing ways are enough to trick anyone. These honorary guests don't care who you are or what your story is, they visit everyone.

Whether or not you welcome them is your choice.