

Just Make a Start

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Just Make a Start

by [EmeraldAshes](#)

Summary

Sometimes, family is two ghosts, one demon, a life coach, a grieving widower, and his unusual daughter.

Notes

The core idea of this fic is "The Maitlands put off being parents, but now they're literally everyone's parents," though it is also wandering into more generic family fluff. I'm planning to write more chapters for this fic as inspiration strikes. So feel free to throw ideas my way!

First Puppy

“Barbara!” Lydia called out, skipping up to the ghostly woman as she relaxed in the living room and watched one of her boring nature documentaries.

Barbara paused the video and slowly turned. “You sound way too happy to see me.”

“What? I can’t be excited to spend time with my favorite person?” Lydia literally batted her eyes.

“Uh-huh. What did you do?”

“Nothing.”

“What do you want, then?”

“A puppy?” Lydia said.

“A puppy,” Barbara repeated. “Why aren’t you asking Charles?”

“I did. And he said that if you said okay, then he would say okay.”

Barbara sighed, massaging her temples. “He really needs to stop outsourcing his parenting decisions. Did he do this with your mom?”

“All the time,” Lydia said. “So is that a ‘yes’ on the puppy? Because we sort of found one, and...”

Barbara suddenly understood exactly where this was going. “What’s wrong with it?”

“She’s perfectly healthy. If anything, she’s extra-healthy.”

“That isn’t what I asked.”

“She might have three heads?”

“Oh my God.”

“No, she’s really sweet. Beej?”

Beetlejuice floated in, cradling a seven-week-old Cerberus. One tiny snout snuggled into the crook of his arm, a pair of teeth nipped at a loose thread on his sleeve, and a final fluffy head leaned up to lick at his neck. The puppy’s midnight black fur seemed to absorb the light in the room, and Barbara felt a sudden sense of impending doom.

She shook off the familiar sensation and focused on the issue at hand. “Is that thing even safe to have around?”

“*She* has a name. Well, technically she has three names” — a third arm slid out from under Beetlejuice’s coat to point at each puppy — “I’m calling this one Blue Ivy, this one Apple, and this one Kal-El.”

Lydia rolled her eyes. “Yeah, we are not calling her that.”

Barbara said in her best Mom Voice, “Well, I hope not because I still haven’t said yes.”

Lydia pouted, turning puppy dog eyes toward her. Then, she snatched up the tiny cerberus so that three more sets of puppy dog eyes were staring at her. “Can we please keep her? I know I’ve always said I was more of a cat person, but I’m starting to think that’s because I never had a hellhound of my own before.”

Barbara gave Lydia one last stern look and then folded like a house of cards. “Fine.”

“Oh, this is gonna be so much fun!” Beetlejuice cried out.

“But only if we check the Handbook for the Recently Deceased *and* talk to Miss Argentina about it to make sure everything is above board,” Barbara said, finally giving in to the urge to scratch the puppy’s ears. “I do not want one of us getting dragged to the Underworld just because we decided to adopt an exotic pet.”

Lydia raced forward to hug her. “Thank you, Ghost Mom!”

Dating Advice

Beetlejuice floated into the attic, hair disheveled, eyes manic, tie askew. That was all pretty normal for him, but the frantic shouting was a change. “Guuuuuys! I need help.”

“Oh, no,” Barbara muttered, setting aside the novel she was reading and mentally preparing for the Deetz home’s latest disaster. “Did you summon a sandworm again?”

“Nah, I learned my lesson after Thanksgiving.”

Adam peered up from his model town. “Are you fighting with Lydia?”

Beetlejuice shrugged. “Not actively.”

“Is your mother back? Because I’m just about ready to kill her myself at this point,” Barbara growled.

“That’s sexy,” Beetlejuice said, “But no.”

“Then what’s happening?” Barbara asked.

Beetlejuice coughed, hair color softening from a deep purple to a light pink. “I have a date.”

Adam blinked. “Really?”

“Hey! Is it so shocking that someone could want some of this?” Beetlejuice waved at his body: mossy-patches, disgusting suit, and all.

“Yes,” Barbara said.

“Fuck, you’re right,” Beetlejuice muttered. “I’m doomed.”

Barbara smiled at him. “Hey, relax. It’s fine. This person must like you if they’re going on a date with you. Otherwise, they just would have told you ‘no’ when you asked them.”

“She asked me,” Beetlejuice said.

“Wow,” Adam said. “This girl really *does* like you. What’s she like?”

Beetlejuice flung himself onto an antique rocking chair, ignoring Adam’s horrified gasp. “She’s a blatant self-insert.”

“I’m not sure what that means,” Adam said.

Beetlejuice glared at the ceiling. “It means she’s perfect.”

Adam chuckled. “Beetlejuice, nobody’s perfect.”

Beetlejuice kicked off from the attic floorboards, setting the rocking chair into creaking motion. “They are when they refuse to write their own flaws.”

Adam said, “I feel like I’m missing something here.”

“Our life is a fanfiction,” he muttered.

Barbara and Adam shared a look. Clearly, The Ghost With The Most was in one of *those* moods. A “none of this is real and neither are the consequences, so I can blow shit up” kind of mood. The dining room was still short three chairs from the last time he had been like this.

“This date is gonna go great,” Barbara said, ignoring Beetlejuice’s self-pitying moan. “It’s gonna go great because *we* are gonna help you.”

“What?” Adam and Beetlejuice said in unison.

“Yep! We’re probably the least scary people you’ve ever met, right? So we are going to make sure that you have an awesome date with an awesome girl *without* scaring her away.”

Adam’s mind fell into his “restoration” mindset as he looked over Beetlejuice’s bedraggled...everything. “We’re also going to see about the whole ‘hygiene’ issue.”

Beetlejuice beamed, showing a few more teeth than should ever belong in a living creature’s mouth. “This is starting to sound like an 80s movie. Can I be Molly Ringwald? Are we doing a makeover?”

Barbara spoke slowly. “Do you want to do a makeover?”

Beetlejuice’s hair poofed up into a stereotypical 80s ‘do. “More than anything!”

Wedding Day Jitters

Delia was not hiding. She was just taking a little tiny break from the wedding preparations. In the pantry. Where nobody was going to bother her. Really, it all made absolute sense, if you thought about it for a moment.

As her guru Otho said...

“Are you okay?”

“What?” Delia said, suddenly face-to-face with a spectral Adam Maitland.

“Charles is looking for you. Beetlejuice did something to the cake toppers...but it’s not that important. Are you okay?”

Delia’s words tumbled out, tripping over each other. “I’m fine, absolutely fine, I don’t know why you would even ask that. Because really, I’m fine.”

“Breath,” Adam muttered.

“I *am* breathing,” Delia snapped.

Adam leaned back to make space between them, his back phasing through a shelf of canned goods. “I’m, uh, talking to myself. I don’t technically need air anymore, but breathing still helps sometimes.”

Delia nodded. “It’s good for balancing the chakras.”

“...Right,” Adam said. “I know you’re fine, but it would be alright if you needed to talk, too. I had cold feet on my wedding day.”

“No! I can’t even imagine! You two are perfect for each other,” Delia said.

Adam chuckled. “I know that now, and I knew it then, too. But I had cold feet about *everything* at that age . Even the best things. Besides, you and Charles are kind of perfect for each other, too.”

Delia plucked a can off the shelf, twisting it around in her hands. It was cold and heavy. Hardly a crystal but good enough for a moment of grounding. “I wasn’t nervous at all my first time, even though I really should have been. He spent more time with the Best Man than me! But I was so *sure* that everything would work out. This time is different. I know that marriage isn’t forever. Death can ‘do us part,’ or he might just decide to run off with someone else so they can canoodle on a beach all day!”

Adam laughed. “That doesn’t sound like Charles.”

Delia giggled. “No, I guess not. He isn’t really the beach type. Although he is a *tiger* in...”

“I don’t need to know that!” Adam yelped.

“Too late,” she sing-songed. “I *am* trying to think positive. It’s just trickier than you might think, sometimes.”

“I can do a little positive thinking for you, if it helps.”

Delia beamed. “It really does! The Universe is always listening. So, what did Beetlejuice do to the cake toppers?”

Adam’s shoulders slumped. “Unspeakable things.”

Delia raised an eyebrow.

“...They’re having tiny cake topper sex. The frosting is a mess. Charles got so angry that he unsummoned him, so now Lydia is mad and...Maybe we should just stay in the pantry, come to think of it.”

“It does need a good clean-out,” Delia agreed with a sparkle in her eye. “Some of these cans have expiration dates older than Beetlejuice.”

The house shivered, and the air grew heavy with expectation. Delia rolled her eyes but finally added, “Beetlejuice. Beetlejuice.”

“Oh, yeah, baby!” Beetlejuice crowed as he was summoned, taking down an entire shelf of dry goods. “Thank you, Deborah!”

The demon launched himself out of the pantry and down the stairs. A high-pitched scream echoed through the house, and Delia was almost certain that it belonged to her fiancé. The redhead hummed thoughtfully as she opened up the pantry door and stepped out into the kitchen. “Do you think he knows my real name?”

Adam snorted. “I’m sure he does.”

First Birthday Party

“So what are you guys planning for your deathday?” Beetlejuice asked over dinner one night.

Lydia immediately perked up. “Deathday?”

“Yeah, the day you die. People do all sorts of stuff for it. Like drown their sorrows in alcohol. Or throw a big-ass party with lots of booze. Any excuse to drink, really. Of course, the Debbie Downers just hole up in their haunts and wail all day. You strike me as a wailer, Babs.”

Barbara casually flicked a piece of cauliflower at his head.

“I hadn’t really thought about it,” Adam said. “I would say we should do a day of remembrance...”

“Boring!” Beetlejuice called out through a mouthful of steak and potatoes.

“...but we’re still here, and our lives are pretty much the same as they always were. So there’s not much to remember.”

Lydia leaned towards Beetlejuice, eyes shining with fascination. “What do you do for your deathday?”

Beetlejuice blinked. “Me? I don’t really have a death day since I never died. Well, except for that one time. *Thanks*, Lydia.”

Lydia smirked, stabbing a bite of steak with a flourish. “Anytime, Beej.”

“What about your birthday?” Barbara asked.

Beetlejuice shrugged. “I don’t think I have one of those either.”

“You don’t have a birthday?” Delia asked, sounding absolutely horrified.

“No? I mean, I was born...or made, I guess.”

“Made?” Charles mumbled. Typically, he tried to tune out any supernatural conversations because he didn’t enjoy existential questions with his evening meal. They gave him indigestion.

Beetlejuice continued, “Mom never mentioned a date, though.”

“That is just so sad,” Delia mumbled.

“I, uh...” Beetlejuice promptly dislocated his jaw, shoved the rest of the steak inside, mumbled something, and floated through the ceiling.

“So, we’re fixing this, right?” Lydia asked.

Barbara stood up, mind already spinning with ideas. “Of course we are.”

“SURPRISE!”

“Oh my goooosh,” Beetlejuice squealed, hair morphing from its usual green to a kaleidoscope of colors.

“I’ve never seen your hair do that before,” Delia said.

Beetlejuice ran a hand through his hair, pulling a multicolored strand down so that he could see it. “I don’t even know what to feel, so I’m feeling *everything*.”

Delia beamed. “That sounds a little worrying, but I like it! It’s a good look on you. Happy birthday!”

“Wait. Is it my birthday?”

“It is now! You didn’t have one, so we made it up,” Lydia said.

“It was a little more complicated than that,” Delia said. “I used star charts.”

“Now, put this on.” Lydia handed him a sash and crown.

Beetlejuice gasped, then flung the sash over his suit, shoving the crown haphazardly on his head. He flew around the room, crying out, “I’m the birthday princess!”

Lydia grinned. “Told you he would love that.”

“Birthday princeeeeeesssss,” Beetlejuice continued to shout.

Adam chuckled. “If you’re already this excited, I can’t wait to see you when we open the presents.”

“You got me a present? You are the best daddy ever.” Beetlejuice purred, slinking into Adam’s personal space.

Adam stepped away, retreating into a suddenly-shivering Charles. “Somehow, the ‘daddy’ thing is actually more uncomfortable the other way around. And *everybody* got you presents.”

Beetlejuice’s hair had settled on a brilliant fuschia, which more-or-less matched his sash and crown. “Where are the presents?”

“First, cake!” Barbara called, carrying out a tiny cake with a candle shaped like the number 1 on top.

Beetlejuice peered down at it. “I could eat that thing by myself.”

Barbara set it down on the table. “That’s the idea, actually. I got you one of those mini baby cakes to destroy. Make a wish!”

Beetlejuice blew out the candle, then buried his face in the cake. He came up covered in frosting. “Babs, you know me so well.”

Mutual Sobriety

Chapter Summary

“Beetlejuice, you know you don’t have to pretend to drink, right?”

“That isn’t good for the plant.”

Beetlejuice jumped, wine splashing on the carpet. “Christ, A-Dawg! When did you get sneaky?”

Adam said, “You know you don’t have to pretend to drink, right?”

Beetlejuice waved away the spilled wine with a flick of his wrist. “Who says I’m pretending?”

Adam glanced at the wilting houseplant in the corner. “The plant.”

“Traitor,” Beetlejuice hissed at the leaves, his eyes sparking with fire and his hair blood red.

Adam fought the urge to feel sorry for a shrub. “I don’t drink either, you know.”

“Yeah, I know. You’re incorporeal.”

“Before that,” Adam said. “Barbara might be on the ‘dry white wine side,’ but I’m strictly a Pottery Barn kind of guy.”

Beetlejuice gasped, grabbing Adam's shoulders. "Oh em gee. Are you quoting lines from the first time we met because that is so romantic."

Adam dodged a sloppy kiss. "No kissing, and please stop trying to change the subject."

"Babes, your hot bod is always the subject on my mind, if you know what I mean."

"Beetlejuice."

"Adam," the demon mimicked in a nasally voice.

"Alcoholism runs in my family," Adam said. "Why don't you drink?"

Beetlejuice shrugged, backing out of Adam's personal space. "Uh, same?"

Adam smiled. "Alright. Do you want to talk about it?"

"Noooo?" Beetlejuice said slowly. "I mean, really, what is there to talk about? So my mother chose alcohol over me, and she was only ever nice to me when she was super drunk. And every time I have a couple of drinks, I end up sobbing in a corner. But it's whatever, I'm over it."

Adam said, "Uh, Bee? Your hair is purple."

"No, it isn't." Beetlejuice grabbed the nearest lampshade and jammed it onto his head. "Wanna kill something?"

Adam winced. "No! Well, maybe in a videogame."

Beetlejuice tilted his head to the side. “A whatsit?”

“Wait...have you never played a videogame before?” Adam grinned and grabbed Beetlejuice’s hand, dragging him to the nearest computer. “You’re going to love them.”

Deadbeat Dads

Chapter Summary

Lydia's voice rang out. "I HATE YOU!"

A door slammed, and soon Charles slumped down the stairs, looking miserable.

Adam sighed, reluctantly releasing Barbara's hand. "I've got this."

Barbara grinned at her husband. "He said he wanted to murder someone, so you introduced him to Super Smash Bros."

Adam shrugged. "What did you expect? Grand Theft Auto? I wanted to keep him busy, not give him inspiration. Besides, I think Smash did a pretty good job of sating his bloodlust in a family-friendly way."

Barbara broke out into giggles.

His mock-indignant "Are you laughing at me?" was betrayed by the humor in his voice.

"Never," she said, leaning close to brush a lock of hair back from his face. "Have I mentioned how much I love you lately?"

"Only every day."

Barbara grabbed his hand. " *Only* every day? Guess I've been slacking."

Adam's voice was soft and rough. "I guess you have."

"How about we take a little trip up to the attic and..."

Lydia's voice rang out. "I HATE YOU!"

A door slammed, and soon Charles slumped down the stairs, looking miserable.

Adam sighed, reluctantly releasing Barbara's hand. "I've got this."

"No," Beetlejuice declared, pushing past him. "I've got this."

The demon strode up to Charles, trapping him in a clearly unwanted hug.

Adam sighed. "Yeah, I'm still going."

Barbara gave him a quick peck on the lips. "You do that."

"Beetlejuice," Adam said firmly as he approached them. "Remember our conversation about good touch and bad touch?"

Beetlejuice, nose buried in Charles's neck, mumbled, "Mine is the bad kind?"

"No. Well, sort of. Clearly we need a refresher, but the point is that this thing you're doing right now is definitely a *bad touch*."

"Please get off of me," Charles said with the tired patience of a longsuffering man.

Beetlejuice reluctantly released him. “Chuck, I know things seem tough right now, but I want you to know that I’m here for you. Emotionally, spiritually, sexually...”

“Beetlejuice!” Adam cried.

“...but mostly emotionally. I never knew my father, but imagine he would be a lot like you. Y’know, emotionally closed off and never giving me approval.”

Charles winced. “I am trying to be more...open...with Lydia, but I can’t give her everything she wants just because she’s grieving. For God’s sake, she summoned a *demon* the last time I got stern with her. I have to draw the line somewhere. I just wish she wouldn’t react like this every time I set my foot down.”

Beetlejuice rolled his eyes, one falling out mid-roll. “Dude, she’s a teenager. She’s gonna be like this for *years*. If she gets all sweet, then you gotta worry because she’s manipulating you. Or she’s realized that you never liked her after all and is desperately afraid that you’re going to banish her to Saturn like you always threatened...”

Charles and Adam stared at him, mentally adding this to their list of “reasons why Beetlejuice is like he is.”

Beetlejuice popped his eye back in. “Wooh! Sorry, flashback to my hilariously abusive childhood.”

“Abuse isn’t funny,” Adam said. “And Charles, Beetlejuice is right.”

“I am?” Beetlejuice asked.

Adam continued, “I never knew my father either, and I’m not saying that you deserve a Dad of the Year Award just for showing up...”

Beetlejuice interjected, "Really? Because that's exactly what I'm saying."

"...but it counts for something. You're here. You're trying. And one day, when Lydia is older, she'll understand that."

"Until then, there's alcohol," Beetlejuice added cheerfully.

"Perhaps you have a point...Thank you, Adam," Charles said, then walked away.

Beetlejuice's jaw dropped, elongated mouth hanging roughly to his knees. When it snapped back into place, the demon said, "Wow. Rude. Did you hear that, babes?"

Adam was staring into space, though a waving hand in front of his face, then two waving hands, then a *third* waving hand brought him back to the moment. "Sorry. Just...got lost in thought."

"Sexual fantasies?" Beetlejuice commiserated.

"No, uh, I was thinking about my father, actually. I always thought that I would be a better dad to my kids, but now I guess I'll never find out."

Beetlejuice leaned forward to pinch his cheek. "Adam, you beautiful, brainless man. You already are."

"What?"

"I swear, nobody ever reads the tags," Beetlejuice muttered. "You're basically a dorky, loveable sitcom dad for the whole house. Especially Lydia and me."

Adam's voice was monotone. "You see me as a father figure."

"Yes, daddy," Beetlejuice said in a way that was *definitely* still sexual.

He continued, "You're 500 years old."

Beetlejuice smile. "Right!"

"You hit on me constantly."

Beetlejuice winked. "And if you showed the slightest sign of reciprocating, I would climb you like a tree. But for once, we aren't talking about your incredible good looks. The point is that you're a really good dad, so your absentee father can suck a dick."

Adam finally decided to just go with it. "Uh, thanks?"

Beetlejuice rummaged around in his pockets. "It's a little early for Father's Day, and I know you don't drink coffee. Or anything ever again. But anyway, I got you this."

Beetlejuice planted a wet smooch on his cheek and wandered off to find Lydia. Adam, though, spent a long time frozen in place, clutching a #1 Dad mug.

Valentine's Day (Kinda Sucks)

Chapter Summary

"I hate Valentine's Day," Beetlejuice declared.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"I hate Valentine's Day," Beetlejuice declared, draping himself over the couch in an over-the-top woe-is-me manner.

Lydia rolled her eyes. "You're just pissed because Y/N broke up with you."

Beetlejuice lifted his head to give her a flat stare. "Uh, yeah. Duh."

"Whatever happened with her, anyway?"

"She didn't like me for me," Beetlejuice said. "Typical fangirl, y'know? When you're like 'I would kill for you,' the panties drop, but the second you follow through it's all like 'Oh my gaaaawd, why is my ex-boyfriend's head on a dinner plate?' And then the head started talking, which I thought was hilarious, but she way overreacted. She didn't even have the guts to break up with me in person. She just stopped uploading new chapters like a coward."

"Sucks," Lydia said with zero sympathy.

"And now I'm here. Alone. Miserable. Blue-balled. Stuck with a bunch of stupid happy couples." He glared at the ridiculous bouquet of roses that Charles had bought for Delia. All big and showy and incredibly fucking romantic.

"I'm single too, you know," Lydia said.

“Yeah, but that’s on you. I mean, I totally put a ring on it so... Wait. You know what would make us both feel better?”

“Forgetting that creepy marriage thing ever happened?”

“Yes,” Beetlejuice said. “But I was gonna say ‘ruining other people’s Valentine’s Day.’”

“I’m listening,” Lydia murmured with a smirk.

He clapped his hands, the bouquet of roses immediately shriveling and turning black. “Let’s start with the Maitlands!”

Chapter End Notes

If you're a reader-insert writer, know that I only tease because I care. ;)

Grocery Shopping with Beetlejuice!

Chapter Summary

Beetlejuice and Lydia go grocery shopping. It goes exactly as well as you're imagining...

Beetlejuice came stumbling into the kitchen with four overflowing grocery bags swinging off each arm. "Hell yeah! One trip, baby!"

"Why didn't you just make clones?" Barbara asked.

"Uh, I did?" Beetlejuice said as six more of him came in, similarly laden down.

Barbara gasped. "Holy...Beetlejuice, there were maybe 15 things on that grocery list. Why did you buy so much?"

"I'm preparing for winter," he said with an air of condescension.

Barbara surveyed the piled-high groceries and giggled, "I guess we're gonna be eating a lot of chips this winter."

"Yeah, sure, you're laughing now, but who's gonna be laughing when the famine comes? Huh? Huh? Huh?" Beetlejuice tore open a bag of chips, downed half of it in one tilt of the head, and loudly crunched them in Barbara's ear. "Also, there was a 2-for-1 sale."

"Well, at least it's all human food," Barbara said cheerfully. "I was honestly worried when I heard you were the one doing the shopping."

“You wound me, Babs. I’m bleeding out on the floor here. You’ll have to kiss me better.” Beetlejuice collapsed onto the floor, then cracked open an eye to watch a clearly unamused Barbara stare down at him. “...I’ll settle for a high-five?”

Lydia walked in with the eggs, casually high-fiving him on her way to the fridge. “Alright. That took like four hours, but the store is still standing. So yay progress.”

Barbara asked, “What could have possibly taken that long?”

Beetlejuice stepped in front of the googly-eyed robot. “Missed a spot.”

The robot began to turn, and Beetlejuice darted forward to block it. “Missed a spot.”

Lydia tossed a bag of apples into their cart. “Beej, you know it’s not a person, right? It’s not smart enough to be mad at you.”

Beetlejuice jumped into the robot’s new path. “Missed a spot...Look, Lyds, I don’t care if it knows what’s happening. This thing is basically my natural enemy. You know why?”

She wandered toward the vegetables. “Do I look like I care?”

“Because its job is to fight messes, and I AM A HOT MESS.”

“Uh, babes, do you think maybe we should just ask a worker where the pierogies are?”

Lydia shook her head. “No, I got this.”

Beetlejuice trailed behind her. “I’m just saying, we’ve circled the frozen aisle like three times now. It might be quicker if…”

“I said. I got this,” Lydia growled, stomping down the aisle and glaring at each shelf.

“Right. You keep looking, I’m just gonna go talk that stocker over there. Dude has clearly stared into the pits of hell and decided that he just does not give a shit.”

“Beetlejuice?” Lydia said coldly.

Beetlejuice continued walking toward the worker, turning his head 180 degrees to say, “Yeah?”

“Beetlejuice. Beetlejuice.”

When Beetlejuice was summoned back 10 minutes later, he said, “Okay, so number one: That was super uncool. Number two: I did a little bit of blood magic and I think I have a lead.”

Lydia held up the box.

“Oh. Guess I didn’t need to bleed after all. Where was it?”

“With the french fries.”

Beetlejuice gasped, hair turning a putrid yellow. “You shut your mouth.”

As Lydia loaded up the car, Beetlejuice peered into the darkness of the parking lot.

“You maybe want to help me out here?” Lydia asked.

“Nah.”

“Jerk.”

Beetlejuice frowned. “Look, I’m not saying that shopping cart is possessed because that would be craaaaaazy, but OH MY GOD RUN!”

“It turns out it wasn’t actually possessed. Beetlejuice is just a total scaredy-cat,” Lydia concluded.

“It was totally possessed,” Beetlejuice grumbled.

Barbara surveyed the mountains of groceries piled around them. “Well, the good news is that we never need to go grocery shopping again.”

Life Coaching: Nailing It!

Chapter Summary

“Are you trying to sell me on your life coaching thing? You know I’m not gonna pay you, right?”

Delia smiled at Beetlejuice. “I think that your happiness...and my ability to hold a dinner party without everyone running out screaming...would be payment enough.”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"Beetlejuice?" Delia said softly, keeping a solid ten feet between them. Smart, considering he'd nearly chunked her off a balcony the last time she'd startled him.

"Yeah, Deb?" Beetlejuice said, attention mostly on the TV as he sprawled across the couch.

"Are you okay?"

"Yeah, of course."

"It's just that you've been watching static for a few hours now."

Beetlejuice blinked. "...I like this channel."

Delia bravely stepped closer. "Do you feel like you're struggling?"

Beetlejuice snorted. "I mean, only since I was born."

"Do you feel lost? Or depressed?"

Beetlejuice finally turned away from the snowy television screen. "Are you trying to sell me on your life coaching thing? You know I'm not gonna pay you, right?"

Delia smiled, taking another small step until she was resting her hands on the armrest of the couch. "I think that your happiness...and my ability to hold a dinner party without everyone running out screaming...would be payment enough."

Beetlejuice flicked off the TV with a snap of his fingers. "You *really* think you can help me?"

"Technically, you need to help yourself. A life coach is just meant to be a guiding force. I would recommend my former guru Otho, but he isn't talking to me after the whole...you...situation. So I'll do my best." Delia watched him hopefully, hands tapping against the couch's armrest.

Beetlejuice shrugged. "Eh, why not? Sounds fun."

"Beetlejuice, what are you doing?" Barbara asked for the sixteenth time that week.

Beetlejuice glared at her and said, "Mm-meh-duh-tuh-rrng."

Barbara frowned down at where the demon was sitting cross-legged on the living room floor. "What?"

He ripped off the duct tape and said, "I'm meditating."

"Right, but the...?" Barbara made a circling gesturing over her lips.

“Yeah, so it turns out that meditating is *hard*,” Beetlejuice said. “Delia was like, ‘You have to clear your mind.’ And I was like, ‘Okay, sure, piece of cake. I never think anyway.’ Then it turned out that I’m not allowed to talk, either. Which is dumb because somebody needs to call out those guided meditation voices on their bullshit. Delia started getting all upset about it, so I was like fine, whatever, I’ll just duct tape my mouth shut. Problem solved.”

Barbara winced. “That doesn’t sound very comfortable. Was it actually working?”

Beetlejuice grinned. “Yeah, totally. Until you messed up my zen, anyway.”

"Reiki is not a thing, Beej," Lydia muttered, paying more attention to her magazine than her best friend.

Beetlejuice shoved his hands in her face and wiggled his fingers. "You're just jealous because I've got magic hands -- and not just in the bedroom."

Lydia shifted away. “It’s dumb, and you know it.”

“You know what, I don’t need you,” he declared. “I have a new best friend. Her name is The Universe.”

“Uh-huh.”

"Hey, Universe. You won’t believe the day I had. It was awesome. Delia dragged me to this Spiritual Fair, and I saw this medium doing a reading in the corner. And she was all like 'I sense a woman on your father's side. Her name begins with an M, or maybe an N?' And they were all like," Beetlejuice's voice rose to a falsetto. "'Ohmigosh, that's MEGAN.' And she was like, 'MEGAN. Yes, it is Megan, from the OTHER SIDE.'"

Lydia finally looked at him. "So you decided to mess with them?"

"Uh, I was talking to the Universe? So you interrupting is kind of rude? And yeah, of course I messed with them. I also decided to become a medium. At least I can talk to the dead for reals."

"Yeah, no, they're still not proud of you. Sorry."

"Heaven? Sure, I guess the Netherworld is kinda like heaven. Just sadder and lonelier and dark all the time, and your aunt has been in line for citizenship for like three years now. But she says she's fine. What's new with you?"

"Line's open, buddy, but nobody's calling. This happen a lot with your living relatives, too?"

"It turns out that people don't actually want to talk to the dead," Beetlejuice concluded a few days into his new career path. "They just want you to lie all the time, and then the ghosts get mad because you're lying. And the breathers are all 'thank you, thank you,' and you feel all funny because you know it's bullshit..."

"So you quit?" Lydia asked.

Beetlejuice grinned, showing off a yellow smile with cockroach legs stuck between his teeth. "Yep. Staged my own death and everything."

Beetlejuice smirked as Charles turned an alarming shade of red. "Look, I don't know what you people have against essential oils. Or me starting a small business."

"We have to fumigate the house," Charles ground out.

"And I apologized for that," Beetlejuice said, wondering idly when the Deetz house would be habitable again.

"No you didn't," Lydia called up from her cot on the hotel room floor.

Beetlejuice stuck out his tongue at her. "You're a traitor, and I'm telling your father what really happened to your old camera."

Lydia chucked a pillow at him.

"I have an idea, and you're gonna love it," Beetlejuice told Delia a few weeks into their life coaching sessions.

"Are you finally going to try out yoga?"

"What? No. Never. We should start a cult."

“Sorry?”

Beetlejuice sighed. “You’re gonna say ‘no’ without thinking it through. Don’t deny it, I can see it in your beautiful, doe eyes. You need to really think about it alright?”

Delia opened her mouth to speak.

Beetlejuice slapped a dirty hand onto her lips. “Shhhh. Think about it. Think about it. Thiiiiink about it...Okay, did you think about it?”

“Yes?”

“And your answer is?”

“No?”

“C’mon, it could be so good. I could be the dark god, you could be my precious little sunshiney prophet. We would be such a good team! Imagine it: chicks, money, power.”

“I don’t want those things,” Delia said.

“Uh, how about love and friendship and murderous devotion?”

“That was a lot more convincing.”

“Come on, Guru Delia,” Beetlejuice purred into her ear. “Take over the world with me.”

“I *knew* you knew my name!” Delia shouted. “And my answer’s still no.”

Chapter End Notes

More is coming, fellow Delia lovers. More is coming.

Road Rage

Chapter Summary

"I decided it was time for us to do a little bonding. Y'know, man time."

"Man time," Charles repeated dully.

Beetlejuice did jazz hands. "Take Your Demon to Work Day."

Chapter Notes

Fun fact: Beetlejuice the Brutally Honest Medium was low-key inspired by my New Agey mother's only experience with a medium who came off at all believable. The medium connected us with several relatives and my mother's childhood dog...all of whom wanted her to pass a message on to someone else.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Charles stopped at a stop sign, looking to the left, then the right, then growling as a car whipped out from behind him and passed him on the left. "Really? Couldn't wait 30 seconds? Sorry for following the law, you *bastard*. "

"Uh, language," Beetlejuice said.

Charles flinched in surprise but managed to keep his car in its lane. "Beetlejuice!"

"That's the name. Don't wear it out," the demon cheerfully agreed, lounging in the passenger seat.

"What are you doing here?"

"Lydia's at school, and she was all like 'Don't bother me. I have midterms!' So I decided it was time for us to do a little bonding. Y'know, man time."

"Man time," Charles repeated dully.

Beetlejuice did jazz hands. "Take Your Demon to Work Day."

Charles slammed on the brakes as a car cut him off. "You could have killed us all!"

"I would have been fine," Beetlejuice smirked, his hair darkening to a blood red. "Of course, Lydia could have been in the car, and she's only mortal so..."

Charles' hands gripped the steering wheel, going white.

"If I were you, you know what I would want? Vengeance." The demon leaned in close and whispered, "Don't you wanna make them suffer?"

Charles was silent as he stared out at the road.

Beetlejuice whistled. "Oh wow. You're really thinking about it, huh?"

Charles said stiffly, "What? No, of course not."

"Wait, did I kill the moment?" Beetlejuice asked. "Come on, baby. We can get it back."

With a snap of his fingers, the radio station turned to a low, ominous instrumental. He slithered into the backseat, then pressed up against the back of Charles' seat, grubby hands massaging his shoulders. "Think murderous thoughts for me."

"We're not murdering anyone."

Beetlejuice hummed in a vague, placating way as he continued to massage Charles' shoulders. "Man, you are all knots back here. Like, I want you to picture a troop of boy scouts getting their rope tying badge. That whole shindig has *some* knots. Your back has a *lot of fucking knots*."

Beetlejuice found a particularly tight spot and dug in with his knuckles. Against his will, Charles moaned.

Beetlejuice's hands froze. "Holy shit, that just went straight to my panties."

"Get off," Charles said.

"Yeah, working on it," Beetlejuice murmured into his ears.

"Let. Go," he growled.

Beetlejuice eased back in his seat, grinning. "Fine, fine, but if you could keep talking like that for a minute or two, that would really help me out here."

"Beetlejuice," Charles said, clearly struggling to keep the anger out of his voice. "Sit down."

Beetlejuice licked his lips. "Yes, daddy."

As they continued down the road, Beetlejuice continued, "I mean, it doesn't have to be *murder* murder..."

Chapter End Notes

This is not a shipping fic, but Beetlejuice canonically ships himself with literally everyone soooo...Also, I'm having way too much fun with all the innuendo.

P.S. More Delia chapters are coming down the pipeline.

Queer Is Just Another Word for Strange and Unusual

Chapter Summary

Beetlejuice said, “Lydia, I don’t do the whole feelings thing. You know that. So I’m gonna cut to the chase. Can I murder someone for you?”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

On Friday, Lydia had come home from school, dropped her backpack in the hall, and gone straight to bed. It was Sunday afternoon, and she was still barricaded in her bedroom.

“I’m done,” the teenager had snapped when Barbara cornered her during a bathroom trip. “Wake me when high school is over.”

After the first 24 hours, Charles had attempted to order her out, which had gone precisely as well as expected. Delia had been playing positive affirmations at an obnoxiously loud volume -- at least until the rest of the household had objected.

Adam tried knocking. “Lydia?”

She didn’t respond.

“Lydia, I’m here when you’re ready to talk,” Adam said.

“I’M HeRe WhEn YoU’rE ReAdY tO TaLk,” Beetlejuice mimicked in an obnoxious voice.

Adam glared at him. “I’m respecting her boundaries.”

“You are such a pushover,” the demon said and walked through the door.

“Go away, Beetlejuice,” Lydia groaned into her pillow, buried under a tangled mass of blankets.

“Nope!”

“Beetlejuice,” she said a second time, threateningly.

“Lydia,” he said in the same tone. “Look, I don’t do the whole feelings thing. You know that. So I’m gonna cut to the chase. Can I murder someone for you?”

“No,” Lydia said.

Beetlejuice sat on the side of her bed. “Maim them?”

“No.”

“Scare them so badly that they’ll sleep with the lights on until the day they die?”

There was a short, thoughtful pause, then Lydia mumbled. “You can’t fight all my battles for me, Beej.”

“That’s what you think.” He patted a lump of blankets that was probably her head.

“I don’t wanna talk about it,” Lydia said quietly.

“Talking’s lame,” Beetlejuice agreed and then, after a moment, continued talking, “I know you don’t want me to kill anyone for you, but I think you’re really underestimating how good it feels when your enemies lay dead at your feet. There was this one time in Ancient Greece, we just called it Greece then...”

As Beetlejuice rambled on, Lydia slowly began to emerge from her blanket cocoon. First came a tuft of black hair, then two dark eyes. When her face had fully escaped, she said, “Claire Brewster started a rumor about me.”

Beetlejuice paused. “Yeah?”

“It should be whatever , you know? When she said I cheated on a math test, I could just deny it because it wasn’t true. And when she said I was a witch, I could just be like, heck yeah, I’m a witch. I’m gonna put a curse on you. But now she’s saying I’m a lesbian, and like...I might be? I dunno, Beej. It’s confusing.”

“Do you wanna make out with girls?” Beetlejuice asked.

“Maybe? I mean, I’ve *thought* about it. But that’s normal, right? Everyone’s thought about it,” Lydia said.

Beetlejuice said, “I don’t think the Maitlands have thought about it.”

She rolled her eyes. “Of course not, they’re the Maitlands. But normal people think about that stuff. I just don’t know if I’m bi-curious or if I’m really gay.”

Beetlejuice ruffled her already messy hair. “Kid, you’re overthinking this. You know you don’t have to, like, pass a test to be queer, right? There’s no secret handshake. You just go, ‘I wanna make out with that person.’ And then you do. Maybe it sucks, and maybe it’s great. No biggie either way. Rinse and repeat until you die. Maybe longer if you’re the fun kind of ghost.”

Lydia nodded slowly. “Okay.”

“Okay!” Beetlejuice said. “I’ll get you a copy of the gay agenda. Also, I know you hate color, but Uncle Beej is buying you a bunch of rainbow shit.”

Lydia snorted. “You’re such a dork.”

“You’re a dork,” he declared, grabbing her hand and pulling her out of bed. “Also, if you do decide that you’re queer, then I have a lot of ideas for how you should come out. Like, a *lot* .”

“How did you come out?”

Beetlejuice shrugged. “I don’t think I ever really did come *out* . I just came *on* to everyone with a pretty face. People get the idea.”

Chapter End Notes

This seems like a good time to share an embarrassing story from my adolescence! I'm bi, but I never really "came out" to my family because 1) they're super liberal and 2) I literally cannot shut up when I'm stressed about something.

After a couple of conversations where I was like "Women are sexy. That's like a universal truth. But how sexy do you have to find them before you put a label on it???" they figured it out.

On another note, I don't think mini-me realized that you don't just come out of the closet and yay you did it. You're coming out of the closet every time you meet someone new. And my love life is a fucking trainwreck, so sometimes I accidentally closet myself. One time, I was having a conversation with coworkers who I had known for like six months and had to be like "Oh, are we talking about the queer experience? I have an opinion on this. Side note, I'm bisexual."

Then it turned out that my new coworker was bi, too. We high-fived.

...This author's note might actually be longer than the chapter?

Put a Little More Light In The World

Chapter Summary

Delia beamed. "Can you keep a secret?"

"No?" Beetlejuice said.

"Neither can I. I'm pregnant!"

It's not that Beetlejuice objected to an armful of woman. He just wasn't sure how he had gone from passing Delia in the hall to...

"Why are we hugging? You're not supposed to just jump on people, and I know that's weird coming from me, but Adam won't shut up about it and seriously why are we hugging?"

"Sorry, Beetlejuice. I'm just so excited!" Delia said. "Do you want me to...?"

When she started to pull away, Beetlejuice tightened his grip. "What, no. It's no big deal. You wanna make out?"

"Um, no?" Delia slowly began to wiggle free.

He reluctantly let her go. "Can't blame a guy for trying, especially when a chick can't keep her hands off ya...Soooo, what's up, Guru?"

"Can you keep a secret?" Delia asked.

"No?"

"Neither can I. I'm pregnant!"

"Cool."

"Cool?"

He shrugged. "After all that build-up, I was expecting something a little more interesting. You breathers pop out babies like Pez dispensers."

"I didn't think I could," she confessed. "I'm so *old* ."

Beetlejuice rolled his eyes, popping one back in when it tried to roll out of his head. "Uh, rude. I'm like 10 times your age."

"It's just, oh! I'm growing a life inside of me. My body is crafting a little Deetz. You don't find that exciting?"

"Eh, it's not like I'm godfather or something." Beetlejuice's electric green hair stood on end. "Wait, can I be godfather? C'mon! Dibs! Dibs! Dibs!"

Delia paused mid-no, contemplated the benefits of an immortal demonic godparent, and slowly said, "That's a lot of responsibility. You would have to protect them and support them and be good to them."

Beetlejuice snorted. "Puh-lease, like I wouldn't have done all that stuff anyway."

Delia beamed and hugged him again. "Okay! You can be the godfather. Do you think we should have a ceremony? Oh, who am I kidding? We definitely should."

Beetlejuice gave her a big, yellowed, cockroach-leg-studded smile. "I can't wait to tell Lydia about all this!"

She patted his shoulder. "Alright, just let me talk to her first."

"Why?" Beetlejuice whined.

"Because I'm the one who's pregnant."

"What's that got to do with anything?"

"Well, only one of us can tell her about my pregnancy first, and it should be me. Because I'm pregnant."

Beetlejuice went incorporeal, leaving Delia holding thin air. "Race ya for it!"

Penny for Your Thoughts?

Chapter Summary

The Deetz-Maitland household was quiet today. Too quiet. Really goddamned boring, frankly. Luckily, Beetlejuice was a great conversationalist.

“What’cha thinkin’ about?”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The Deetz-Maitland household was quiet today. Too quiet. Really goddamned boring, frankly. Luckily, Beetlejuice was a great conversationalist.

He slid backward over the armrest of the couch, spine bending in ways that made Barbara distinctly uncomfortable. The Ghost with the Most grinned up at her as his head settled on her lap. “What’cha thinkin’ about?”

“The role of religion in a world where hell is a waiting room.”

“Sounds boring,” he said, slithering away.

A tiny Beetlejuice waved up at Adam from his model town and asked in a squeaky voice, “What’cha thinkin’ about?”

Adam peered down at him. “How the hell did you lasso a sandworm?”

“Uh, long story short, I’m a badass?” Beetlejuice said, then disappeared before Adam could ask for the long story, which involved a lot of screaming and crying.

Lydia was staring down at her math homework, eyes unfocused.

Beetlejuice rested his head on her shoulder. “What’cha thinkin’ about?”

“You know how you’re just a brain staring out of a head, locked in your own perspective? And you’re talking to me, and I’m just a brain. Staring out of a head. Locked in my own perspective. Does that bother you?”

“It does now,” he grumbled. “This is worse than that time Delia made me listen to a guided meditation, and then I became aware of the fact that my tongue was sitting in my mouth. I had to yank it out just so it would stop bugging me...also, I have to do that *again* now because you reminded me that my tongue is in my mouth. So thanks for that.”

Beetlejuice popped up in bed between Delia and Charles. He asked with his newly-grown tongue, “What’cha thinkin’ about?”

“Beetlejuice!” Charles exclaimed.

The demon whistled. “Damn, really? While you’re in bed with this babe? Gotta admit, I’m flattered. What about you, Debs?”

Delia frowned. “I’ve been looking up recipes to cook my placenta, but--”

“Cool beans.” Beetlejuice immediately sank through the bed and under the floorboards.

Charles laughed and swept his wife up in a hug. “Darling, you’re a genius!”

Delia’s eyelashes fluttered. “Oh, Charles...am I?”

“Of course. That was brilliant! You managed to scare off Beetlejuice by *grossing him out* . Frankly, I didn’t even know that was possible.”

“Oh. Oh! Yes, um,” Delia cleared her throat and reclined in a half-hearted attempt at a power pose. “Thank you. For noticing.”

Chapter End Notes

Bless her heart, but Delia is the embodiment of “rolling with it.” My headcanon is that she didn’t even catch the memo during Creepy Old Guy. She’s just very susceptible to peer pressure.

Christmas Traditions: Old, New, and Weird

Chapter Summary

“At first, I thought it was sweet when Beetlejuice started to get into the Christmas spirit. But I’m starting to get seriously concerned.” Barbara led Adam to the Christmas tree, which Beetlejuice was clutching like a baby koala.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“I don’t think we’ve ever really done the whole Christmas dinner thing before,” Lydia said as Adam sorted through the attic looking for an old recipe book. “We would usually go get Chinese or something.”

“My mother would have died if she heard you say that,” Adam said with a grin. “Then she would have haunted you until you learned the error of your ways.”

“Oh no, not the ghost of Mama Maitland,” Lydia cried with mock horror.

“Smell the light scent of her floral perfume and quake with fear. Muahahaha!” Adam’s grin faltered. “She thinks I’m dead.”

“You *are* dead,” Lydia said.

Adam musted a weak imitation of his earlier smile, then turned his attention back to sorting through boxes. “Not the kind of dead she’s picturing, Lyds.”

“Do you miss her? With Christmas coming up and all?” Lydia said softly.

“Yeah,” Adam said.

“I’m sorry,” Lydia said. “I know it’s hard.”

“Sometimes it’s easier when you talk about it. What were the holidays like with your mom, Lydia?”

“We would go to my grandparents’ house for Christmas Eve. My dad’s parents. There are a lot of them over there. Like a lot. And most of them are kind of stuffy. After dessert, mom would come out and announce that it was time for the Annual Family Tradition.”

“What was that?” Adam asked, rifling around in the bottom of the box and pulling out a battered binder.

Lydia chuckled. “Whatever she’d made up that year. Every time someone brought their girlfriend or boyfriend, they would be so confused when she pulled out a bunch of maracas or a pair of fluffy handcuffs or a Pin the Tail on the Donkey game featuring dad or...whatever.”

Adam stood. “She sounds awesome.”

“She *was* awesome,” Lydia agreed.

“And she was right. We might not have any traditions yet, but who cares? We can just make them up!”

Lydia grinned. “They’re gonna be weird.”

Adam leaned close to ruffle her hair, his ghostly touch just a breath of wind. “No doubt. But tradition number one is that we’re making my great-grandmother’s honeyed ham. You’ll understand why once you taste it.”

“At first, I thought it was sweet when Beetlejuice started to get into the Christmas spirit. But I’m starting to get seriously concerned.” Barbara led Adam to the Christmas tree, which Beetlejuice was clutching like a baby koala.

She continued, “Charles was going to put an angel as the topper, and Beetlejuice declared that a demon would be better. Then he climbed it like a cat. It’s been three hours.”

“Are you coming down soon?” Adam called up.

“I’m the most important ornament,” Beetlejuice said, hair a cheerful yellow. “I live here now.”

“I guess you’re gonna miss out on the cookies, then,” Adam said with a too-casual shrug.

In a flash, Beetlejuice was down the tree and up in Adam’s personal space. “What kind of cookies?”

“Nice job, Charles!” Barbara announced as she floated a tray of decorated sugar cookies out of the oven. “Very traditional.”

“This is ridiculous,” Charles said, then added after an elbow jab from Delia, “but so much fun. I’m always happy to spend time with family...and the rest of you people.”

“Delia, loving the smiley-face suns,” Barbara continued.

Delia beamed. “I’m going with a ‘Christmas at the beach’ vibe. That’s why all my Santas are wearing speedos.”

With a flourish toward a group of misshapen cookies on the second tray, Barbara added, “Adam, not bad considering you don’t have working hands.”

Beetlejuice interjected, “That’s not what you were saying last night.”

“Thank you, Barbara,” Adam said, flicking a fallen sprinkle at Beetlejuice’s face. The demon caught it in his mouth.

“Okay,” Lydia began as soon as her cookies emerged from the oven. “So this is a gingerbread man that eats people; that’s why he has all the pointy teeth and the eyeball hanging out of his smile. And the reindeer is vomiting up blood.”

“I see we can expect more calls from the school guidance counselor next term,” Charles muttered.

“Oh, I love Ms. Spencer. She is so sweet,” Delia said.

“And Beetlejuice...I don’t even know what these are supposed to be,” Barbara admitted, staring at the last batch of cookies. They resembled the first clumsy projects from a children’s pottery class, which had then been struck repeatedly by a hammer.

“This one’s Lydia,” Beetlejuice said, pointing at one with chocolate sprinkles that could have been a head of dark hair...if you imagined really hard.

“Like looking in a mirror,” Lydia drawled.

“Then there’s Charles and Delia and Adam and the dog. And this one’s you,” Beetlejuice picked up the final cookie, a burned lump, and popped it in his mouth.

Chapter End Notes

Merry Christmas, readers~

Spooking the Spook

Chapter Summary

Barbara smiled. “I didn’t mean to scare you.”

“Scared? Me? Scared? I do the scaring, I don’t get scared.” Beetlejuice said in a rush.

Chapter Notes

The latest batch of comments made me feel all warm-and-fuzzy, so I decided to polish up one of my drafts for y'all.

On another note, any Riverdale fans in the house? You'd probably like "Alice Cooper Adopts the World." Very similar vibe to this fic, and it only requires knowledge of season 1.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Beetlejuice?”

The demon flew out of his seat on the couch, his head spinning. He stilled it with a smack of his hand and glared at her. “What the hell, Babs? Just because you’re a ghost doesn’t mean you need to spook around the house. Cough or something, *jeez*. ”

“Sorry,” Barbara said with a smile. “I didn’t mean to scare you.”

“Scared? Me? Scared? I do the scaring, I don’t get scared.” Beetlejuice said quickly, yanking his head back into place.

She glanced at the TV, which was frozen on a photo of an emaciated young girl. “What are you watching?”

“YouTube videos about exorcisms and stuff,” Beetlejuice said.

“That sounds like a good way to get nightmares,” she remarked.

“Well, I don’t sleep, so...”

Barbara hopped onto the couch next to him. “Neither do I.”

Beetlejuice clicked play and floated back down onto the couch cushion. “This one’s about Anneliese Michel. The demon shit is creepy, but the human shit is *creepier*. ”

After a few minutes, Barbara asked, “This stuff doesn’t freak you out?”

“Not really. I mean, I’m a literal demon, and I’ve been exorcised before. It was inconvenient at best.”

As a new video flipped on, she said, “You just seemed a little spooked earlier, that’s all.”

“Yeah, that,” Beetlejuice rubbed the back of his head, the tips of his hair flushed a light pink. “My shadow has been acting suspicious lately.”

“Sorry?”

“Yeah, it’s being all shifty.” Beetlejuice whipped his head around to look at the shadow looming behind him. “I’ve got my eye on you, asshole.”

As soon as he turned around, his shadow flipped him off. Without moving his head, Beetlejuice returned the gesture.

“Your shadow just moved on its own. Does it...always do that?” Barbara asked.

“I think it might be plotting to swap places with me so that *I’m* the shadow, even though that didn’t work last time when it had the element of surprise. So it’s sure as fuck not gonna work this time. You hear that, COWARD?” Beetlejuice yelled at the wall as his shadow shook a fist at him.

“Okay,” Barbara said. “I get it. I’m starting to get a bit creeped out myself.”

“Also, there miiiiight have been one video that was eerie as fuck, if you wanna watch it with me.”

Barbara grinned. “Oh, I’m definitely in. If it freaks you out...”

“It didn’t freak me out!”

“Want me to put my arm around your shoulders?” she teased.

“Uh, more than anything?” Beetlejuice said, taking that as an invitation to cuddle into her side. “Before we watch, lemme set the tone, babes. There’s this army guy, and he just came home to visit his family. He calls up his friend, and his friend is all like ‘But you just called...’ Then the phone rings and this creepy motherfucker is on the line.”

A couple of minutes into the call, Barbara snorted. “I’m sorry, but it’s really hard to take this seriously when the father keeps interrupting.”

“He’s a total UFO nut, and I love him,” Beetlejuice declared.

A few minutes later, she said, “Watch the skies? Am I really supposed to believe that an alien called this random family of New Yorkers? Beetlejuice, are you scared of *aliens* ?”

“I mean, I’m more afraid that our sorry asses are the only intelligent species in the universe. But I’m a little afraid of *this* alien, yeah. It keeps repeating shit and its voice is creepy and slow and I hate it and I can’t stop watching.”

“Sweetie,” Barbara said, squeezing his shoulder. “It’s a hoax. The ‘alien’ has a Long Island accent.”

“Does it?” Beetlejuice scowled. “Well, now I feel stupid.”

Barbara chuckled. “It’s normal to get spooked now and again. Besides, your shadow is definitely plotting against you, so it’s probably not a bad idea to look over your shoulder a bit.”

“It won’t try anything while you’re here,” Beetlejuice said. “Soooo, what do you think about True Crime? Yes, no?”

“Definitely yes,” Barbara said.

“Look, I’m not saying that you’re a cliché middle-class white chick,” Beetlejuice said as he started searching for a new video, “but I am *heavily* implying it.”

Chapter End Notes

The UFO story referenced is the Gary Sudbrink Calls. Probably a hoax, but damned eerie when you're reading a transcript of the calls in an empty house in the middle of the night like the fool that you are...

Wake Up and Entertain Me

Chapter Summary

"You're finally awake!" Beetlejuice exclaimed. "I've spent the last eight hours watching TV and waiting for something interesting to happen. Last night, I went to the Netherworld, but nothing ever happens there either. I am coming perilously close to picking up pottery."

When Barbara was a girl, she had a little dog who would never leave her side. When she was at school, he would wait by the window. When she came home, he would nearly topple her over with enthusiasm.

Sometimes Beetlejuice reminded her of that dog.

Beetlejuice sprung up from the couch when Lydia came stumbling sleepily down the stairs. "You're *finally* awake. I've been so bored. You don't even know how bored I've been."

Lydia mumbled unintelligibly as she poured herself a bowl of cereal and shoveled it mechanically into her mouth.

Beetlejuice continued, "This is literally torture, and I get to say that because I was around for the Spanish Inquisition. It was kinda my idea?"

"Mmhm," Lydia said.

"These long nights are killing me, and not like you killed me. At least you were quick about it. One stab, right through the heart, both literally and metaphorically."

"Mmhm," she repeated, eyelids heavy as she stared at the half-empty cereal bowl.

“I’ve spent the last eight hours watching TV and waiting for something interesting to happen. Last night, I went to the Netherworld, but nothing ever happens there either. I am coming perilously close to picking up pottery.”

“A hobby wouldn’t kill you,” Barbara said as she and her husband floated down the stairs.

“You,” Beetlejuice growled. “This is your fault, you know. We could be hanging out. You don’t even sleep! You just lie there and stare at the ceiling like weirdos.”

“It’s important to keep a routine,” Adam said.

Barbara smiled and added, “Also, the cuddling is nice.”

“Oh, what, I’m not good enough to cuddle with?” Beetlejuice said.

“Barbara is my wife. You’re...not my wife,” Adam said slowly.

“And whose fault is that?” Beetlejuice said. “I just don’t get why nobody wants to snatch me up. I would totally marry me. Hell, I actually did once, y’know, for kicks. But unfortunately, the love of a man and his sexy, sexy clone is not recognized by any nation.”

Beetlejuice shook his head sadly, then immediately bounced back to cheerfulness. “But we’re getting off-topic!”

“There was a topic?” Barbara said.

“You’re boring.”

Barbara rolled her eyes. “Right.”

“Lydia agrees with me. Right, Lyds?” Beetlejuice glanced down to find the teen slumped in her chair, dead asleep. “Oh come on, are you really sleeping *again* ?”

“We should probably get her up,” Adam said. “She has school.”

“Who needs school? I never went to school, and I turned out great!”

Barbara quirked her eyebrow while Adam stayed suspiciously silent. After a brief pause, Beetlejuice said, “On second thought, yeah, let’s wake her up.”

The Best Halloween Party Ever!

Chapter Summary

Beetlejuice grinned. "Y'know, when Delia was like 'I'm gonna throw a Halloween party and invite all the sad desperate women in my yoga class,' I thought it was gonna be lame as fuuuuck. But it's actually turned out pretty cool. And I think we have me to thank for that."

Chapter Notes

I got y'all another out-of-season holiday. But it's Beetlejuice so Halloween is always in season.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Beetlejuice leaned against the wall of the Deetz family living room, idly watching the crowd of costumed partiers who filled up their old house. He turned to Lydia, whose face was shredded in two with special effects makeup. It didn't hold a candle to the real thing, but hey, it was cute, he guessed.

He said, "Y'know, when Delia was like 'I'm gonna throw a Halloween party and invite all the sad desperate women in my yoga class,' I thought it was gonna be lame as fuuuuck. But it's actually turned out pretty cool. And I think we have me to thank for that."

Lydia punched his arm, grinning. "You are so full of yourself."

"Oh, I'm sorry, is a Halloween party full of actual dead people not cool enough for you?"

"Okay, fine. It's kinda cool," Lydia admitted. "Especially when they started coming through the walls and Delia freaked out."

"That was only because I wasn't prepared to feed that many people," Delia said as she bustled past in full hostess mode.

"They don't eat!" Lydia called after her stepmother as the woman made a bee-line for the kitchen.

"It's still rude not to offer," the redhead responded over her shoulder.

Lydia asked Beetlejuice, "How did you get them to come, anyway? I thought your friends were stuck in the Netherworld or something."

"It's All Hallow's Eve, babes. The veil between worlds is thin and..." Beetlejuice waved his hand in a circle. "...blah, blah, blah."

"That stuff is actually true?"

Beetlejuice's eyes widened until they were two marbles balanced precariously on his eyelids. "What! No, absolutely not. Neither are ghosts or demons, obviously, because we are people of science and logic and YEAH it's true. Duh. Also, I think there are some crossover characters here."

Lydia's scowled under the prosthetic shredded jaw. "Beej, you really need to stop doing the whole fourth wall thing. We're real. People are getting concerned. And by people, I mean Adam."

Beetlejuice popped his eyes back into place with a hard blink. "Really? So there aren't any crossover characters here? Are you trying to tell me that Charles' business partner isn't obviously Alexander Hamilton?"

"It's called a costume."

Beetlejuice paused to squint at the man, then muttered, "Whatever. What about blondie and the bookends over there? Heeey Mean Girls!"

As Beetlejuice began to wave, Lydia immediately yanked his hand down. "You did not just wave at Regina George. She's literally the worst person in school. She'll eat you."

"Pssssh, if she's so bad then why did you invite her?"

Lydia rolled her eyes. "I didn't. Regina doesn't need an invite. She has a sixth sense for free booze."

"Um, Dad, what are you supposed to be?"

Charles glanced down at his outfit, which consisted of his usual work attire. "A character from The Office."

Lydia narrowed her eyes and asked, "Which character?"

Charles fell silent for a long moment, before muttering. "...John?"

Lydia snorted, eyes twinkling with amusement. "You should probably come up with a real character before the next person asks you why you aren't wearing a costume."

Charles huffed, briefly checked the room for Delia, and said, "I don't see why I should have to wear a costume. I mean, those people aren't wearing costumes, and nobody's bothering them."

Lydia giggled as she recognized the group eerily gliding alongside the snack table. “Dad, that’s the Addams family. Normal *is* their costume. I mean, do you see that girl over there?”

His gaze followed her gesture. “The one with the little bow who looks she could kill a man?”

“Yeah, that’s Wednesday. She’s in my class. She thinks I’m *preppy*. ”

The Maitlands had been going for some sort of weird, creepy doll thing. Unfortunately, they had gone past “creepy doll” and landed in “adorable doll that I would definitely give a little kid.”

"Wooooow." Beetlejuice said flatly. "Scary. I'm gonna take a photo. Strike a pose."

They raised their hands, fingers in a claw-like curl, and did a little kitten growl. Beetlejuice burst into laughter the second he had photographic proof. "You guys are precious butterflies. It's a good thing you're dead because you should stay just like this forever."

Beetlejuice grabbed Lydia's arm, dragging her away from a conversation with Wednesday Addams and Veronica Sawyer. “Lydia, I need your help.”

“No.”

“Uh, excuse you, I could be dying.”

Lydia yanked her arm out of his grasp. “You’re already dead.”

“I could be dying harder.”

She quirked an eyebrow challengingly. “Are you?”

Beetlejuice shrugged. “Nah. But I do need a karaoke partner.”

“You’re kidding, right?”

“Nope! The competition is fucking fierce this year, so my Sinatra impression just is not gonna cut it. Miss Argentina managed to make My Heart Will Go On sexy. Then the Plastics showed up and made a Christmas Carol sexy. And then Orpheus cheated.”

Lydia said, “You can’t cheat at karaoke, Beej.”

“The dude has a heavenly choir as backup singers.”

She blinked. “Is that a thing ghosts can do?”

“Uh, number one, no. And number two, Orpheus isn’t dead. He’s a dead wannabe who snuck into the Netherworld. Y’know, like you. And your dad. But loooong story short, remember that time when we sang a duet and were jumping on tables and then I brought in a bunch of clones to be backup dancers?” He half-heartedly mimicked their dance moves from *That Beautiful Sound*.

Lydia took a step away from him, arms crossed. “No?”

Beetlejuice paused mid-tap dance. “Right, yeah, that might not have been diegetic. The point is that we need to do that again.”

“I’m basically tone-deaf.”

“Okay, fine, whatever,” Beetlejuice said. “Who needs you anyway?”

The demon strolled over to the Maitlands, draping an arm over Adam’s shoulders. “Babes, beautiful, darling, light of my life...How good are you with choreography?”

Chapter End Notes

I usually pretend to be cooler than this. Buuuut frankly, I'm restless, bored, and not above blatant attention-seeking at the moment. Please review!

Hugs!

Chapter Summary

Hugging Lydia was like hugging a cat. Yeah, you could do it, but not without a lot of struggling. And you would probably leave with scratch marks. Delia announced, "You are touch starved, Lydia Deetz."

"I already touch ate, thanks," the teen replied with a curl of her lip.

"You know," Beetlejuice said, slightly strangled, "if you keep throwing yourself at me, then I might get the wrong idea."

Delia ducked his kiss but tightened her arms around him. "You weren't hugged enough as a child. That's why you feel so alone and always look for love in the wrong places."

"Okay, you're not wrong," the demon muttered.

"It's why you married someone who didn't love you," she continued.

"Number one: Ouch. Number two: That was a Green Card thing."

Delia sniffled into his shirt. "It's why you did all those drugs in college."

Beetlejuice responded by bursting into noisy sobs. "I never even went to college!"

Delia continued, voice growing increasingly frantic, "It's why you slept with your boss. And yes, he married you, so it's okay. But it's *not* okay. Just because it ended well doesn't mean it wasn't self-sabotage."

“Uh, guru,” Beetlejuice said. “We’re still talking about me, right?”

Delia patted him on the shoulder and mumbled, “Of course.”

Unfortunately, this incident led Delia to become dangerously overconfident. She set her sights on a much more temperamental target, scooping up Lydia in a surprise hug that, from the teen’s perspective, came out of nowhere.

Hugging Lydia was like hugging a cat. Yeah, you could do it, but not without a lot of struggling. And you would probably leave with scratch marks. Delia announced, "You are touch starved, Lydia Deetz."

"I already touch ate, thanks," the teen replied with a curl of her lip.

“You are so tense,” Delia continued.

“Can’t imagine why,” Lydia muttered.

“I think I got here just in time. Positive physical contact is essential to our health and wellbeing. Ooh! We should do a group hug.”

Lydia didn’t have the time to protest before Beetlejuice had latched himself onto them both. Charles awkwardly followed at Delia’s prompting. Then, she turned her beaming smile onto the Maitlands. “Get in here!”

“Incorporeal, remember?” Adam said with a quirk of his lips.

“Such a shame,” Barbara agreed, doing an admirable job at stifling her laughter as Lydia mouthed ‘Help me’ from the center of the hug.

Delia said, "That's fine. You can just sort of hover on top."

Beetlejuice winked at them. "You can always hug me, y'know. Grab on aaaanywhere you like."

Delia gave a happy little hop in place, still clinging tightly to Lydia. "Right! You can touch Beetlejuice or each other."

"Good touch, bad touch, *very* bad touch," Beetlejuice purred.

"I need an adult," Lydia said dully.

Beetlejuice ruffled her hair. "I am an adult."

"That's a scary thought," Adam quipped as he and Barbara reluctantly joined the hug.

"How long do we have to do this?" Lydia asked, then after a few moments added, "I have homework."

"It's like a Chinese finger trap," Delia said. "The only way to escape is to embrace it."

Lydia cocked her head to the side. "You sure about that?"

"Yes?" Delia felt a sudden sense of dread.

"Hey, Beetlejuice. Wanna break stuff?"

"No can do, kiddo. I'm happy right where I am."

"Beetlejuice," she whined.

"Lydi...wait." Beetlejuice's eyes widened. "Don't you d--"

"BEETLEJUICE," Lydia shouted, darting through the Beetlejuice-shaped hole in the group hug.

Adam chuckled. "That went well."

Delia beamed. "Much better than I was expecting."

Beetlejuice In Quarantine

Chapter Summary

“I don’t know what you’re complaining about,” Lydia grumbled. “You’re the only person who can leave the house without catching this stupid virus. Since you’re dead and all.”

Beetlejuice said, “Okay, number 1: You don’t know that. I heard tigers can get this, and I’m a tiger in the sack. Soooo checkmate. Number two: I’m here to show solidarity.”

Chapter Notes

Just a quick chapter. I hope you guys are doing okay in all this. :)

“This sucks,” Beetlejuice said. “I don’t know how you nerds do it.”

Barbara shrugged. “A lot of hobbies?”

“I’ve always been a little suspicious of the outside,” Adam added.

Beetlejuice flung his head back theatrically. It popped off his neck and rolled across the antique floor. With an upside-down scowl, the disembodied head grumbled. “It’s awful, and I hate it. No wonder you’re such weirdos. I’m sorry for ever making fun of you guys.”

Barbara crossed her arms and peered down at him. “No, you’re not.”

Beetlejuice smirked. “No, I’m not.”

“I don’t know what you’re complaining about,” Lydia said, casually kicking Beetlejuice’s head back toward his fumbling hands. “You’re the only person who can leave the house without catching this stupid virus. Since you’re dead and all.”

Beetlejuice shoved his head in place. “Okay, number 1: you don’t know that. I heard tigers can get this, and I’m a tiger in the sack. Soooo checkmate. Number two: I’m here to show solidarity.”

“By eating all our food and complaining?”

“Got it in one, Lyds.”

Lydia stuck out her tongue at him. “You’re the worst, and this is the worst.”

Delia breezed in, saying, “The real issue here is your perspective.”

Lydia tilted her head. “Really? I thought it was the deadly virus tearing through our population on a global scale. Or the ventilator shortage. Or all the healthcare workers who are getting sick and becoming an active disease vector, which...”

Delia clapped her hands. “Okay! Someone’s clearly been watching the news a little too much. I think it’s time to stop looking outward and look within. Picture this: We are monks on a mountain, completely disconnected from the world outside.”

“Except for WiFi,” Lydia muttered.

“*Completely disconnected*,” Delia repeated, voice strained. “This is our opportunity to reflect. So that when the world is ready for us, we can be ready for the world. Now, I’m going to host an e-yoga retreat in 15 minutes. If anyone wants to join, you are welcome.”

Delia peered expectantly at them, then after a long pause, added, “You don’t have to decide now. That’s fine. I’ll be upstairs.”

Delia beamed at them, then she glided upstairs, muttering, “It’s fine. I’m fine. Everything is fine.”

“Is anyone else worried about her?” Adam asked.

“Yes,” Barbara said.

“Yep,” Beetlejuice agreed.

“Since the day I met her,” Lydia added.

A lazy grin stretched across Beetlejuice’s face. “Want to prank her during that yoga thing?”

Lydia immediately perked up. “Oh my God yes.”

100% Sexy, 0% Father Material

Chapter Summary

Beetlejuice paled as Delia handed her baby to him. "I might drop him on his head."

Delia did not have the energy right now to go full life coach. "Shhhh, it's okay. My parents dropped me on my head, and I'm fine."

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"I am so tired," Delia mumbled, drooping over her new baby on the living room couch. "Can you watch Bodhi for thirty minutes? Please?"

Beetlejuice blinked. "Me? Do you really trust *me* with your kid?"

Delia frowned. "Of course I do."

"Babes, I'm not even sure *I* trust me. I'm made up of a whole lotta sexy and zero percent father material. I might drop him on his head." Beetlejuice's words jumbled together and his voice rose in pitch.

Delia, quite frankly, did not have the energy right now to go full life coach. "Shhhh, it's okay. My parents dropped me on my head, and I'm fine."

"Are we talking about the same *you*?"

Delia approached him, and Beetlejuice eyed the child in her arms like it was a sandworm tensed to strike. "The universe won't let you hurt my baby."

“Don’t you think the Maitlands would be a better fit since they’re y’know…” Beetlejuice made a low whining noise in his throat as the baby was wrestled into his arms. “Adults?”

“You’re his godfather,” she said, stepping back as Beetlejuice awkwardly cradled the baby. “Besides, the Maitlands can’t hold him.”

“I *am* a hugger,” the demon reluctantly conceded.

“Good,” Delia smiled drowsily, stumbling toward the bedroom. “Have fun.”

Beetlejuice stared down at the tiny human in his arms. “Sup. I’m your Uncle Beej. I’m gonna be your favorite one of these days, but not until you can, like, go to the bathroom on your own.”

The baby yawned, clutching the stained, striped suit in a little fist. Beetlejuice’s heart melted. “You’re not so bad, kid. A little quiet, but hey. You’ll grow out of it.”

The Ghost with the Most tentatively began to rock the child in his arms, easing into a steady rhythm. He wondered if he should sing a lullaby or something, but honestly, the only songs he knew were from the Original Cast Album. Finally, Beetlejuice said, “Wanna see a sad puppet show?”

Chapter End Notes

Marking this complete, since I haven't written anything for this one-shot collection in a while. This chapter was drafted out ages ago.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!