

Mischief and Mayhem

By **goodbyedisaster**

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It all began with the 'birth' of Jezebel Skellington. But with the aid of a certain Terrifying Trio of Trick-or-treaters quickly became the tale of her descent into darkness, her abandonment of Halloween, and her return to finish what she had once began.

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1 - Creation

Can the dead grow old?

Can they mature?

Can they age like normal human beings? Like blood and flesh?

These questions buzzed beneath the lid of the good Doctor's skull as he puzzled over his newest project.

To make a child for the newly wedded Pumpkin King and his Pumpkin Queen. A child with traits similar to both of them, and yet the ability to grow, to be nearly alive, but with limitations. A child that could live, but not die, could age but not grow old.

He lifted the top of his skull and scratched what remained of his brain as he watched his assistants collecting all the necessary ingredients to begin the procedure. Already they had a skeleton prepared, the tiny body of a three year old who had years before fallen from the lynch tree, and a brain Dr. Finkelstein had created himself. Once the child was completed he or she would know, within reason, everything the doctor knew.

Of course, that was when the child was done.

Jack visited often, carrying beneath his arms ideas and plans and possible statistics. He wanted her to be smart, to be cunning and creative, but most of all he wanted her to be his heir, he wanted her to be scary.

Sally came as well, thought not as often, with her hopes and dreams and desires. She wanted her daughter, which is what they had decided, to be graceful, elegant, and independent. Most of all, she wanted her to be like Jack.

So the good Doctor began. Now as Crystal returned she piled the ingredients down on the table. A wilted forget-me-not for memory, a tiny metal pump for a heart, and yards and yards of thin tubing to serve as the vanes. Of course, none of this stuff would do the same thing as their human equivalents.

Studying the formulas Jack had drawn, and the supplies the skeleton king had brought, he finally decided on a basic plan of action.

With an invention of his own, the doctor carved thin lines into the inside of the bones, he hollowed them and slowly slid the wires through. To the heart he connected the ends, and with metal bound the bones together. The joints could be severed simply by tugging hard enough, and just as easily be reattached, so just like Jack, his child could tear apart and reassemble its own body, if the need to ever arose. To avoid making any mistakes, the doctor made sure the tiny wire-like tubes would close once the joints were separated, as not to spill their precious fluid once it was added.

With another tool, a human one, he cut off the top of the skull and carefully placed the brain inside. Wires would not be needed in the brain for, once the process was complete, it would work on its own.

For Sally they gave it eyes, a mop of dark brown hair, and a few limbs covered with fabric flesh, sewn meticulously in order for it to be separated easily.

For Jack they gave it a skeleton's body, detachable limbs, and a grinning mouth like the Cheshire cats.

For both of them, they gave it half-life.

Among the things Jack had brought, the Doctor had found a strange book. Within the pages lay the secrets of life and of death, explained and simplified into formulas and charts. With the help of the witches, he managed to create a concoction that would spark the dead cells into life, and give it the ability to grow as long as the liquid was supplied. Once the supply ran out, the body would stop aging, and the child would remain the same forever without end.

For Sally they gave it a voice.

For Jack they gave it strength.

For both, they brought it to life.

He placed the decanter of liquid into the metal heart, and flipped a switch. The liquid began to circulate through the vanes as the metal heart began to pump. If his calculation were correct, one single drop absorbed into the bones each day would be enough to keep it growing normally, if not a little fast, and the supply now pulsing through her vanes would be enough for the next eight years.

If not the doctor always had some stored away beneath the operating table in a locked chest.

It was a rare and difficult concoction to make, and when it ran out, he had no intention of ever making it again.

It was just too hard to liquefy the living human soul, when no human was willing to die.

The doctor steered himself over to the window, and threw it open enough for him to fit his head out.

A shock had to be generated to the artificial brain in order to bring it to life, with lightning he could do that.

"No storms coming tonight." He muttered, as Crystal lowered him back into his chair. "The rest of the procedure will have to wait till tomorrow night."

Scratching his brain once more, he allowed Crystal to wheel him out the door, turning off the lights as he went, before they began the descent.

"I wonder where Igor has gone?"

Igor, who had left to answer the door, clambered up the stairs a matter of minutes after Crystal and the Doctor had left them. In one hand he held a note for the doctor, and in the other a tiny crystal vial. The note, which he had read with difficulty, was supposedly from Jack.

This is the final ingredient to our project, pour it on the brain.

-Jack.

It appeared to be written by a young child, but Igor didn't know better. He clutched the vial close, as he entered the laboratory, waiting until the dim lights flickered on before he shuffled over to the operating table.

With a stupid grin he threw back the white cloth, dropping the note to the floor, forgotten, and stared down at the creation.

Had he been in the right mind, he would have given the note straight to the doctor, but his simple sense of pride would not allow it. Ever since Crystal had showed up Igor had grown obsolete and, like a dog, he hoped to return to his masters good graces.

Placing the vials cork on the table, he reached forward and opened the skull.

If he did something good, the master would give him biscuits, give him attention-

He lifted the creation's shoulders off the table, watching for a moment as the liquefied human soul spun and wound its way through the body.

If he did good-

He emptied the content of the vial into the skull, and for a moment it lingered and collected in the grooves.

Then without a sound, it sank into the soft flesh.

Outside three children sprinted away from the building, laughing and cackling as the disappeared into the darkness.

The next day, during a violent storm, Jezebel Skellington was born.