

Control

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Can the author come into his own fanfiction? Of course! It only takes a flick of the fingers...

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1 - Author

'Hmm...' I thought, picking up the book I'd gotten at a garage sale. I ran my finger down the table of contents. 'To transport yourself to the place you desire to go...page 114.' It was a Magick Book, as proclaimed on its cover. I skimmed over to the page. 'Here we go!' I thought, slinging my laptop bag over my shoulder and looking over the magic words.

AUTHORAUTHORAUTHOR

Kimiko, Clay, Raimundo, and Omi were relaxing in the courtyard. Master Fung had given them the day off and they were deciding where to go. Clay had just turned to Raimundo to see what he was talking about when he heard an incoherent squeal over his left shoulder. Mine.

"Omigod! It worked!" I squealed, jumping up and down in my pirate boots. The dragons covered their ears.

"Where'd you come from?!" demanded Raimundo.

A slow, slightly evil smile came over my face. "None of that," I said, shaking a finger. I slowly raised my hand and he came up with it, getting steadily to his feet. "Dance," I commanded, flicking my fingers. He began a fast tap dance.

"What's happening?!?!" he demanded shakily. A lot of demanding from this one. I turned my palm into a fist and let it drop and he stopped. "Holy cow, what just happened?"

"Are you a witch?" Dojo asked timidly from under Clay's hat. Clay wasn't looking too good himself: pale and shaking.

"No," I said, "merely an all-powerful being. You may call me..." I struggled to come up with a cool sounding name, "Author." I know, not the most creative, but what can you do?

"Author," said Omi reverently.

I smiled again, but none of that evil crap this time. "Author," I agreed. "I can make any of you do whatever I want! I can make you sing," I flicked my fingers at Clay and he began a rich Italian opera in a velvety voice. I lowered my fist. "I can make you do back flips," I flicked my fingers at Omi this time and he began back flipping all over the place. I lowered my fist. "I can make you...and Raimundo..." I looked at Kimiko.

"I believe you!" she hastily assured me.

"So," I said, "You'd better not piss me off." They all nodded. "Now, I'm going to go see the one person I know here about some accommodations." I spun on my heel and marched off to where I knew the Master was. The one person I couldn't control.

Dragon's POV

"I'm going after him," Clay said determinedly.

"Are you serious, man?!" asked Raimundo. "He'll tear you apart! You've seen what he can do! He's evil, man."

"But he knows the Master, he cannot be all bad," said Omi.

"He may know something about him, that's why I'm going after him," said Clay. "Y'all do what you want, but this cat's about to be killed." He went after her.

"He's killing a cat?!" squeaked Omi.

My POV:

"Master Fung!" I called, seeing the old man.

His eyes widened visibly. "Elijah Clark? What are you doing here?"

"Experimenting," I said breathlessly. "I found a book of Magick, and it actually worked! I'm here, and I can control everyone weaker in mind, spirit, and creativity than me! So...I guess I can't control you. I can control Wuya, though! She's weaker in creativity. And Chase Young, since he has no spirit. Also, the monks and Dojo. Clay's weaker in mind, Kimiko's weaker in creativity, Rai's weaker in mind, spirit, and creativity, Omi's very close to matching me, except in the creativity department, and Dojo's, well, just the tiniest bit weaker in spirit, since he's a dragon. Oh," I added, "my new name is Author."

"Very good, young Author," said Master Fung, bowing to me. "You've been learning since I last saw you. Now, I'm assuming you need a place to stay?"

"Yes, please, Master." I bowed just as deeply and followed him, but not before dropping a note on the floor where I was sure the fly on the wall would get it. Not much escaped my attention.

Clay's POV

I watched this conversation with interest, questions forming on the lips I knew mustn't open. As he bowed and left, I noticed a piece of paper drop out of his sleeve. As soon as he was gone, I darted forward and grabbed it, thinking it was important information. I opened it, and it simply read,

'Don't go messing in things that shouldn't be messed with. Do you want to know how eavesdropping is punished where I come from?

'Author

'PS Look up.'

I looked up, just in time to see a bucket of water fall onto my head. My hat, however, floated easily to where it wouldn't get wet. I knew it was his doing.

'Well,' I thought as I dusted off my hat, 'at least he respects that.'

2 - Snapped

“Score,” whispered Rai as he held up the blue-velvet covered book. It had ‘Journal’ splayed across the top, and it was in Author’s room. This was what he’d been waiting for. Author, fortunately, had only brought this journal with him, so he was in town with Dojo (who’d taken a liking to him) picking out ‘necessities’. He shoved the journal in a black bag he’d brought and ran to the garden, where Kimiko, Omi, and Clay were still enjoying their time off (Master Fung extended it to two weeks, except for a bit of training and Shen Gong Wu alerts, since the holidays were coming and they had a guest), mostly talking about Author. “You guys,” he panted, holding up the bag. “I found his journal.”

“Really?” asked Kimiko.

“Should we?” asked Clay.

Rai nodded. “Have you already forgotten the bucket of water? And who knows what he’ll do to you!” he said looking at Kimiko. “The back flips?” he asked Omi.

Omi shook his head. “It is not right. You do what you will, but I will not partake.” He walked away, muttering to himself.

“Whatever,” said Rai. “We need to know what he’s planning.” He pulled out the book and flipped to December 13th, a week before he’d joined them.

Dec. 13

Stuck. Stuck at my dad’s house for the holidays. I have no desire to sit in some stuffy Baptist church and listen to the preacher talk about Jesus dying, when we’re celebrating his birth, then sing hymns about Jesus dying. Whatever. Too depressed to write now.

Dec. 15

Went Christmas shopping today. My father is forcing me to dress like a boy, in macho outfits, when he knows very well I have no desire to do. He just wants me to be a little him, even IF I’m gay. I want to be at mom’s house for the holidays! I want to hang out with her boyfriend, George, I want to have my own Christmas party instead of just the company Christmas party. I don’t want to hang out with my psychotic stepmother who insists that Will’s gay and I’m a fatty who will develop adult diabetes. Will might like purple and musical theater, but so did dad when he was a kid, and look at him! True, I don’t want my brother to turn out to be my dad, God no, but Dad’s straight. And I’m pretty sure Will is too.

Earlier today, that’s what the psychotic woman told me and Will. That we’d grow up to have adult type two diabetes. I’m freaking 13! It scared me out of my wits! She told us we’d lose all our limbs and die. I can’t write right now. My hand is shaking. I’ll go take a shower.

Dec. 17

Company Christmas party at our house today. Totally boring, I watched the baby. She cried, and pooped her pants, but eventually settled down to watch Frosty with me. I'm glad she's got me, Will, heck, even Sarah to watch over her. Who knows what crazy thing Haley might grow up to be with just Dad and Belli? Craziiness.

Dec. 19

Wrote a song today. Called it Depth Perception. Kind of emo/goth hardcore rock, but not metal. Depressing, yeah, but that's how I'm feeling right now.

This is hard to write, but I have to get it out. I was told basically, screw my dreams. Told my writing and drawing weren't going anywhere, told my movie has no point. I just feel like telling myself to screw it.

Why can you not accept me for who I am? I like me. Why can't you like me? Why do you persist in making me feel like a piece of crap, unworthy to be scraped off the bottom of your shoe?

Screw it. Just...screw it.

I feel like if I died, right now, no one would notice. And if they noticed, they wouldn't care. I'd be left to decay on the end of a noose hanging from the ceiling. Again, screw it.

Interpret this entry however you like. I don't care anymore. I really don't. I finally figured out the failure I really am. I'm just wondering why I didn't figure it out earlier.

Screw. It. I quit.

Dec. 20

This page was splashed with tear drops. Through the drops that smudged the ink, they could see some lyrics.

I guess that my depth perception

Isn't what it used to be.

'Cause I always thought

That you were deeper than me.

But now I can see

You're not as deep as the sea.

Not as deep

As I thought

You would be.

Here goes nothing. I only hope it works, so I can get out of this nightmare.

There was no more after that. Raimundo closed it softly. "He just wanted to escape..." he whispered.

“Yeah...” said Kim, shaking her head. “Something must have gotten real bad for him to want to escape all the way to China.”

Clay was processing something completely different. This journal said Author was gay...just like him...

“See?” whispered a little voice to the left. Turning, they saw Author, shaking, his face turning white, then red, then white again. Omi was hiding behind his legs. He’d obviously brought him here.

“D-d-d-did you...” he sputtered, “read it?”

The three dragons reluctantly nodded.

“Since what date?” he asked, deathly quiet.

“December 13th,” muttered Rai. Clay pulled his hat over his eyes, obviously ashamed. Kimiko suddenly found a strand of hair very interesting. Rai looked at his shoes.

“Since I went to my dad’s house,” he whispered. He walked forward and snatched the book out of Rai’s hand. He handed it to Omi, then yelled, “I TRUSTED YOU!” He flew at Rai, trying to punch him and getting a few knocks in. Kimiko rounded him and tried to keep him off. Author just tried to kill her as well. Clay then went and picked him up, holding his arms to his sides. He looked at him. “I trusted you the most.” He struggled a bit, then just went limp. “Let me down,” he whispered. Clay put him down, and he sank to his knees. He looked up, his eyes full of tears, then ran off to his room.

“Author!” cried Omi.

He turned around. “My name is Elijah! I never want to be an Author again!” He proceeded to run again.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk,” said a voice above them. They looked up to see Jack hovering over them. “I thought I was bad.” He brought his heli-bot down and deactivated it.

The dragons got into fighting positions. “Don’t make us cry on you!” said Omi.

“Wail on you,” said Rai.

“That too!”

Jack sighed. “Relax, cue ball. I just came to check on this new dude that’s all over the Xiaolin message boards. See if he was hot, see if he was strong, all that. Well, I couldn’t really tell if he was hot, because his hair was all in his face, and he wasn’t strong enough to overpower the cowboy, but few are. Looks like he got you, though,” he said, pointing to Rai. Rai wiped the blood coming from his nose, then looked back at Jack. Jack smirked. “That was a nasty thing to do, stealing a gentleman’s diary.” Suddenly, one of Jack’s Jack-bots exploded. “What the hell...?”

Another one exploded, then another. “What’s going on?” asked Omi.

Dojo smirked. “Elijah. He can control machinery.”

"I'm through being sad!" thundered a voice from across the courtyard. They turned around and saw Elijah standing in a black cape. He had a tear-streaked face and fiery, furious eyes. He looked downright scary. He extended a hand from beneath his cape and fixed his eyes on Clay. He pulled his hand toward himself, and he came with it, his feet scraping the ground as he tried to get away. He knocked the cowboy hat off his head and grabbed his hair. He looked right into his eyes and he screamed, but he couldn't break away. His scream was cut off abruptly, and he crumpled to the ground. Elijah lifted a rock off the ground and hurled it into the air with his mind.

"He stole Clay's powers," whispered Kimiko.

"And made them stronger," said Dojo, his voice shaking. He ran off to hide in some bushes.

"You..." said Rai, shaking. He ran at him and he gripped his hand, gripping him as well. He took him the same way he took Clay, but Rai didn't scream. He just gave him a cold, angry look. The sky began to take on a blood-red color, and the plants began to wilt.

Kimiko was next. She wasn't about to take it lying down, but Elijah just played with her like a mouse in a trap. Eventually, Kimiko went down the way Clay did, screaming, and Elijah chuckled as he tossed a ball of fire around in his hands. Elijah turned to Omi.

"Omi, you are the only one that didn't betray me, besides Dojo. Join me, Omi!" he commanded in a raspy voice that was very unlike his own.

"No," said Omi coldly. "You hurt my friends. I will never join you."

Elijah smiled. It was a dark, creepy, psychopathic smile, but a smile nonetheless. "They are not dead, Omi. I will release them if you'll join me."

"Never."

"Then pay for it!" he rasped. He took his powers as well. As they all lay crumpled on the ground, he turned to Jack. "You have nothing I want, but I could still use you."

"Wh-whatever you want!" he squealed. "You're amazing!" This was like Chase, but better. Much, much better.

"Carry them with you and follow me," said Elijah in a commanding tone. He created flows of air that flew him over to a hill, where, as they watched, a huge castle came up, very gothic, and he flew into it, cackling, as Jack followed behind, very excited.

3 - Release

“Pull!” screamed Elijah. Jack pulled the lever on the skeet machine, shooting a disk into the air. Elijah smashed it with a boulder. “Pull!” he screamed again, this time killing the disk with a great ball of fire. “Pull!” He slayed it with a powerful jet of water. “Pull!” “Pull!” “Pull!” Murdering each of them with a blast from an element.

“That’s enough,” he told Jack, and he shut off the machine.

“Lady, the prisoners wish to see you,” said a new voice, as Chase walked into the room, bowing.

“Very well,” he said, grinning a deliciously evil grin at him. “Show them in.”

Chase snapped his fingers and four big cats led in four angry prisoners, chained at the ankles and wrists. As soon as they were lined up in front of him, Chase stood to his left. Jack stood to his right.

“Well?” barked Elijah. “Speak!”

“We have questions,” said Omi.

“I assumed as much,” said Elijah. “You may each ask one.”

“Why did you steal our powers?” asked Rai.

“You read my diary,” he snarled. “I should have killed you. I didn’t. Count yourselves lucky.”

“LUCKY?!” demanded Kimiko, firing up. “You stole our powers, locked us up, and took over the temple, our home!! We’re lucky?!”

“Yes, lucky,” said Elijah softly, dangerously. “You’re alive aren’t you? You’re standing here talking to me, aren’t you? I didn’t take over the world, did I? That was your question.”

“Where’s Master Fung?” asked Omi before Kimiko said something that would get her into trouble.

“Here,” said Elijah. “He wasn’t easily overpowered, but we got him eventually.” He paused, looking at Clay. “Well? You still haven’t asked anything.”

He thought for a moment. “What did you mean, ‘I trusted you the most’?”

Elijah stared at him. “Leave us,” he commanded Jack and Chase.

“But, Lady – ” started Jack.

“The prisoners – ” said Chase.

“LEAVE US!” shrieked Elijah, a cold wind slamming through the castle hall. Jack was quick to scurry

out. Chase led Kimiko, Rai, and Omi out, along with his cats. As soon as they'd left, Elijah snapped his fingers and the chains fell from Clay's wrists and ankles. "Make one move and I will kill you," said Elijah quickly. "I'm not afraid to." He stared at him in thought once more. "You ask an interesting question for which I am at a loss for an answer." He looked at him again. "Clay, do you know how old I am?" he asked.

"14," he answered quickly.

"Indeed," he sighed. "I am 14. A 14-year-old boy with hormones, hatred, love, desire, detestation, all locked up into a little overly creative mind. I can't deal with all that. I needed someone to hang onto." He pulled out his journal and flicked open to a page. "I don't know what's happening anymore," he began.

"Only two things haven't changed.

1. My father's a prick.

2. My step mom's a dog.

Everything else is confusing and scaring me.

1. My older brother is joining the Air Force. He may go to Iraq. I won't see him for four years. He may go overseas. He may die. I don't understand why he's doing this.

2. My older sister and I are suddenly friends. I have no idea when this happened. I know, this isn't something I should be angsty about, but it's weird.

3. My little brother is still an annoying plebe, but he's also getting more mature. I don't understand why he has to grow up: I like him the way he is.

4. My little sister is getting bigger, too. She's walking, she's talking, and I don't get to see her every day. It's a little weird seeing her and seeing how much she's grown.

5. My mom's a teacher. I never get to see her anymore in the mornings. She sometimes doesn't get to say goodbye.

6. My social life is insane. A 'slutty' friend, a brilliant friend (who claims she's not), and a friend and her boyfriend's on-again-off-again relationship.

7. I'm changing. Hormones, a changing body, craziness. I'm not even going to pretend I don't hate God for those little tricks. Why does he do this to the XX chromosome?

My family's crazy. My friends are crazy. My life is crazy.

I don't understand. Life needs a manual," he finished.

"Good enough for you?" he asked. Clay nodded mutely. "I began watching you, and I fell in love with

you,” he said. “You were the man of my dreams. You were kind, chivalrous, handsome...I loved that accent,” he said dreamily. He shook his head and reverted to his normal voice. “I began to trust you, even though I didn’t know you. So – when I finally came here – from another universe – I felt like you were the one I could trust the most.” He laughed humorlessly and began to cry. “I was wrong.”

“How were you wrong?” asked Clay, coming over and sitting in front of his throne, facing him.

“You read my journal,” he said, snapping the blue book shut and placing it beside him. “I felt like you’d snapped my heart in two when you did that.”

“I’m sorry,” Clay offered.

“Okay,” said Elijah, sniffing. “You must think me really silly.”

“No,” said Clay, holding his hand and stroking it. “No, no, no. I think you really misunderstood. I can understand that.”

“You can?” asked Elijah, looking up at him hopefully.

“Yeah, actually,” said Clay, surprised. “People don’t get you. I get that.”

“You’re the first,” said Elijah, conjuring a tissue out of thin air and blowing his nose. “No one at home can understand why I lock myself into my room for hours just to write. Or draw. Or listen to music. Or whatever.”

“You need alone time,” said Clay.

“I need to feel like I’m – ”

“ – Wanted. You need to feel like everything – ”

“ – Will be okay,” finished Elijah quietly. “Did we just finish each other’s sentences?”

“I think so,” said Clay. “Was that – ”

“Me? No,” said Elijah. “You did that – ”

“All on my own?” asked Clay, awestruck. He looked at him, and he looked at him. His gray eyes held some long-repressed secret that had just been released. His blue ones held the kind understanding that everyone wants to see. He leaned forward – he was so close – he could count every eyelash on his closed eyes – he was so close –

AUTHORAUTHORAUTHOR

“What took you so long?” asked Rai as soon as Clay got back into the cell.

“What did he say?” asked Omi.

“What happened?” asked Kimiko.

Clay didn't appear to be listening to any of them. He walked forward, turned around, leaned onto the wall, and slid down it. He crossed his arms onto his knees, his eyes thoughtful, his mouth twitching into a smile. He sat like that for a moment, his friends looking at him with concern.

“Clay? Halloo?” asked Rai, waving his hand in front of Clay's face.

“We're bein' released,” said Clay.

“Why?” demanded Omi, instantly suspicious.

“You kissed him, didn't you?” asked Kimiko.

Clay looked at her with a shocked expression on her face. “How'd you know?”

“Girls know these kinds of things,” she answered briskly. “So? Why?”

“He...opened up to me,” Clay began. “He explained about his family. His situation.” He looked at Rai and Omi. “He's not evil. Just misunderstood.”

“Is he a good kisser?” asked Rai.

Clay looked at his knees, a blush creeping onto his face. “Yeah,” he said sheepishly.

4 - Fulfillment

“Well, it’s official,” said Elijah, unchaining the prisoners. “You’re released.” He stood and held his arms out for a moment, glowing brightly, then lowered his arms. “All your powers should be returned to you.”

“Thanks!” said Rai, playing with a bit of air.

“Welcome,” said Elijah, turning around.

“Does this mean you’re not all powerful anymore?” asked Jack. Elijah shot him a filthy look and he began to crow like a rooster.

“Any more stupid questions?” he asked, his voice dripping with sarcasm.

“No,” said Jack, massaging his throat. They both headed back inside.

“I’m not sure how much I like the idea of him and another guy living together,” said Clay suspiciously.

“Oh, calm down,” said Rai. “Like he and Jack are going to do anything.”

“It’s not Jack I’m worried about,” said Clay, casting a dark look over his shoulder.

Meanwhile, with Elijah...

“Lord,” said Chase, bowing to Elijah. “I don’t believe you and Clay should be together.”

“Why would you say that, Chase?” asked Elijah.

“I spoke to Master Fung,” said Chase sleekly. “And he said where you come from, we are merely figments of the imagination, merely drawings.” He grinned evilly. “Is it really natural to be seeing a figment of your imagination?”

This sent Elijah reeling. He’d never thought of it that way. What was he doing? But he was so happy! He backed up a few paces, then turned and ran up the stairs.

Chase still had that wicked smile on his face. He’d done his part. He sat in his vacant throne to wait until Elijah’s love came too late.

Back with the dragons...

“Somethin’s wrong,” said Clay abruptly, stopping in his tracks. “Somethin’s wrong.”

“What?” asked Omi.

Clay held a look of utmost horror on his face. "Elijah," he croaked, dropping his things and running back to the castle.

Back at the castle...

Clay, Omi, Kimiko, and Rai burst in and ran into Jack. He had a wild look on his face. "I haven't seen Elijah all day, and Chase is sitting in his throne, and I'm worried!"

Kimiko grabbed his hand and they all ran into the throne room. Sure enough, there was Chase, sitting on Elijah's rightful throne, looking for all the world like the cat who killed the canary. "Well, well, well," he said neatly. "What do we have here?"

"Where's Elijah?" asked Clay fiercely, staring Chase down.

"Now, now," said Chase. "Don't get 'strung out.'"

Clay ran forward, lunging with his arm in front of him and pinning Chase to the throne. "Where's Elijah?" he demanded with a snarl.

"On the roof," Chase said with a smirk, "killing himself."

All of the breath seemed to leave Clay's body at that instant. "No," he whispered. Chase's smirk still remained.

"We have to save him," said Jack, spinning around and running up the stairs to the roof. Clay barreled ahead of him. Elijah had confessed to him, he'd kissed him, what was he doing – ? Jack quickly matched him in speed. Could Elijah never have seen that Jack didn't simply want the power, he cared about him as well?

They reached the roof. As they banged through the door to the roof, they saw Elijah. He stood on the turret of one of his walls, hair tied back in a black ribbon, one black-booted foot already off the wall. He turned and saw them. His eyes widened and he prepared to take his final, last step.

"WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?!?!" screamed Jack, careening for Elijah as he leaped off the turret. He just barely caught him, grabbing him by the waist out of thin air and tackling him onto the stone floor, hard. Elijah screamed in pain, throwing him off and clutching his ankle.

"To answer your question," said Elijah through clenched teeth, trying to stand up and failing miserably, "killing myself."

"Why?!" demanded Jack, confused and upset and not understanding and a plethora of other emotions.

"I'm tired of life," spat Elijah.

"Tired of life?!" challenged Jack. "Why don't you add some more salt to the wound?"

“What’s that supposed to mean?!”

“We already think you’re psychotic! This doesn’t help matters at all!”

“You, who were so quick to join my team, think me psychotic?” asked Elijah, firing up.

“Yeah, actually,” said Jack in a mock-thoughtful voice. “Yeah, I do.”

“Well why don’t you just get it over with and break another bone?!” Elijah demanded. His breathing had indeed become very light and blood soaked his ankle.

“Elijah,” said Clay hoarsely.

“What?” he snapped. However, the look on his face stopped him. Clay looked...very tired, and very sad, and very...vacant. He looked like a man who’d lost all reason to live. He looked like Elijah himself did when he’d looked in the mirror earlier that day, right after Chase had talked to him. “What?” he asked again, his voice softer and kinder.

“Why?” Clay rasped.

“I told you all,” Elijah said, turning away. “I’m tired of life.”

Clay sank down next to him, lifting him up and pulling him into his lap. Elijah still wouldn’t look at him, so Clay gently turned his face towards him. “Why?” he repeated.

Elijah began to cry. “I love you,” he sobbed, “so much.” He kept sobbing. “But I can’t. And if I can’t be with you, I don’t see what the point of living anymore is.”

“Why can’t you be with me?” asked Clay. Was he...breaking up with him?

“It’s not the way things are done where I come from,” murmured Elijah.

“Listen to me,” said Clay sternly. “Do you have any intention of goin’ back where you came from?”

“No,” said Elijah.

“Then why’s there any problem?” he asked gently.

“There isn’t any,” Elijah muttered. “Being stupid. It’s just...where I come from, this would be regarded as insane, or impossible.”

“Is this where you come from?” Clay asked.

“No,” said Elijah.

“Then don’t be worrying,” said Clay, bundling him into his arms and picking him up. “I love you. Isn’t that all that matters?” He smiled at him softly. “Come on, let’s get that ankle fixed.” So, the group

trekked off, back towards the temple.