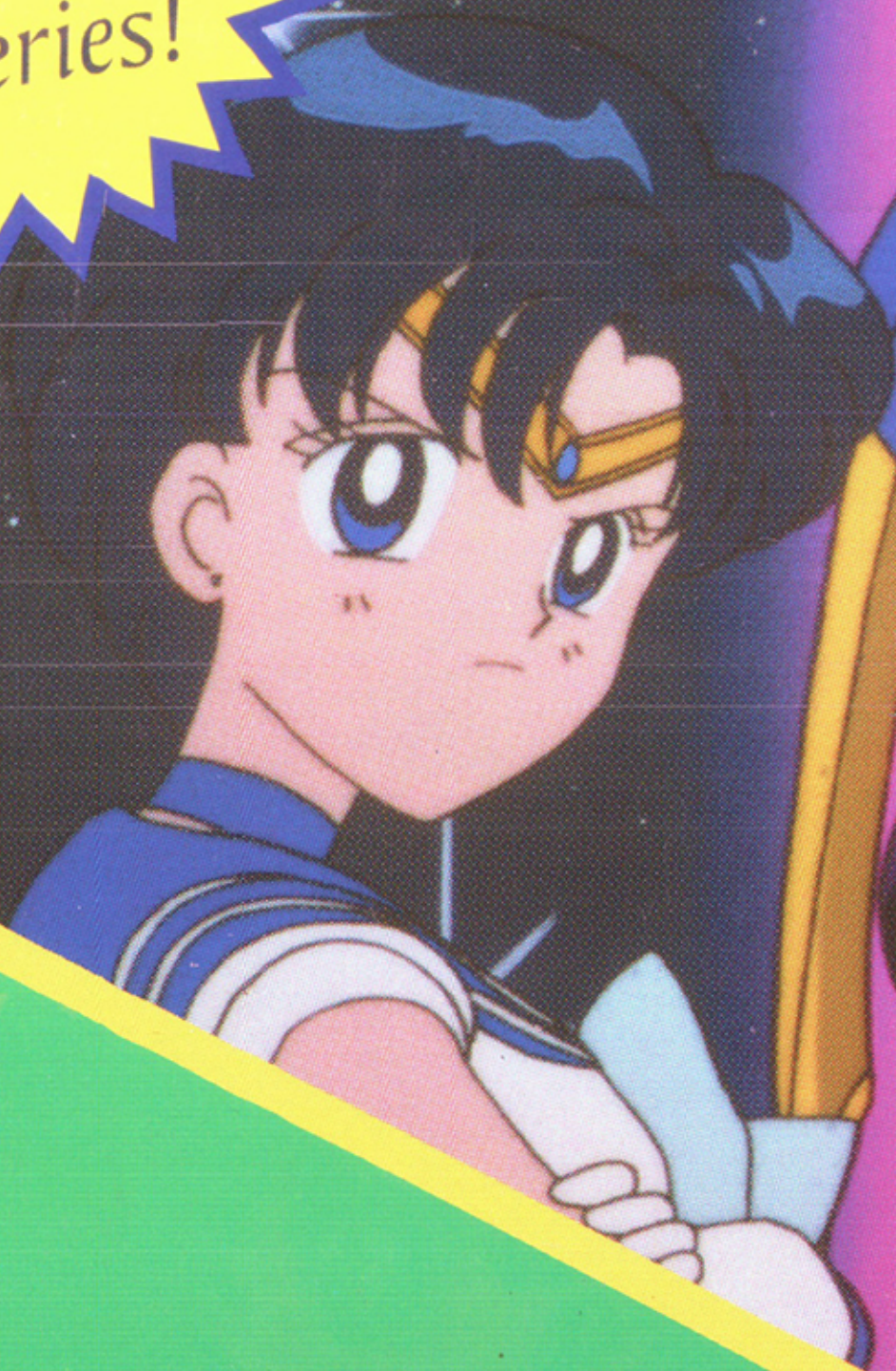


Naoko Takeuchi's

SAILOR MOON™

6

Based on
the hit
TV series!



SMILE
books

SCOUTS
ON FILM

SAILOR MOON™



the novel #6 • Scouts On Film

**"You hurt
two children
who are involved
in a blossoming love.
I am Sailor Moon,
Champion of Justice, and
in the name of the Moon,
you're punished."**

Love, love, love! If you want to stay on the good side of Sailor Moon, don't mess with love! One thing she just cannot stand is to see a good love gone bad. In her latest adventures, Serena fights for true romance! She's got a wedding to go to. OK, so it's not her own, but it's still a wedding--there'll be cake! When a mysterious minister threatens the ceremony, Serena suspects the Negaverse at work, and it's Sailor Moon to the rescue! Love. Ain't it grand?!

Join Serena in her sixth novel, *Scouts on Film*, based on the international blockbuster hit TV show, for more:

**ACTION
ADVENTURE
ROMANCE
COMEDY
and FUN!!**



SMILE!®

A Mixx Entertainment Production

\$4.99 U.S.

RL 4 008-012

www.TOKYOPOP.com

ISBN 1892213370



9 781892 213372

5 0499 >



UPC



6 45573 00337

00611 >



1

SAILOR MOON™

Sailor Moon the novel #6

SCOUTS ON FILM

**Written by
Lianne Sentar**

**Created by
NAOKO TAKEUCHI**



Published by TOKYOPOP.com.

Los Angeles • Tokyo

www.TOKYOPOP.com

RL 4, 008-012

TOKYOPOP.com presents
Sailor Moon the novel #6 • *Scouts On Film*
SMILE Books is an imprint of Mixx Entertainment, Inc.
ISBN: 1-892213-37-0

Printed in the United States

First printing May 2000

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Based on the original series created by Naoko Takeuchi. Publication licensed by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.

© 2000 Naoko Takeuchi, Kodansha Ltd., Toei Animation Co., Ltd.

English text © 2000 Mixx Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved.

Sailor Moon is a trademark of Toei Animation Co., Ltd. Used under license. *Sailor Moon* animated television series produced by Toei Animation Co, Ltd. based on the comic series by Naoko Takeuchi, first published in Japan by Kodansha Ltd. English adaptation of the animated series created by and copyrighted:

© 1995 DIC Productions, L.P.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system including the Internet, without permission in writing from the publisher, Mixx Entertainment, Inc. Any inquiries regarding this product should be made to Mixx Entertainment Inc., 5670 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 400 Los Angeles, CA 90036 or via telephone at 323-692-6800 or via facsimile at 323-692-6701 or via e-mail at info@mixxonline.com. SMILE is a trademark of Mixx Entertainment, Inc. The author and publisher would like to thank Laura Holland and the people at Kodansha Ltd. for their incredible cooperation in preparation of this publication. Layout by Akemi Imafuku. Edited by Tim Buggs.

TOKYOPOP products are available online at:

www.TOKYOPOP.com

or ask for them at your local retailer.



Chapter 1

Wedding Bells are Ringing

"AAAAAAAAIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII!!!"

Molly Baker's head shot up. She gasped at the curled-up blonde on the floor.

"Oh my God!" the redhead cried, running around the table and dropping to her knees. She threw her arms around her friend. "Serena, are you OK?!"

Serena Tsukino, her face twisted in agony, shook her head violently. "No!" she said with a gasp, clutching Molly's blouse. "It's the end, Mols. I'm through!"

"What's wrong?" Molly's eyes were wide

HALLOWEEN

with terror. "You were fine a second ago. Serena, what's wrong?!"

Serena sucked in a breath. Painfully, she thrust up her index finger so Molly could see.

Molly blinked. "What?" She pointed to a tiny red drop of blood on Serena's finger. "That's it?"

Serena yanked her finger back and shoved it into her mouth. "Whaddya mean 'dat's it?'" she mumbled as she sucked the wound. "Mowwy, dis is da miyyiont time I pwicked mysewf today. I'm gonna bweed to deaf!"

Molly sighed. She stood up and brushed off her skirt. "Serena," she said, letting out a sigh. "Don't scare me like that. I thought your appendix burst or something."

Serena jumped to her feet. "Appendix? Come on, Molly!" She stuck her finger out again. "This is much worse!"

Molly ignored her best friend and went back to her side of the table. Serena angrily righted her own chair, brushed a long blond ponytail over her shoulder, and sat down.

It was a typical day in Home Economics class. The students sat two-aside at tables and

scouts on film

worked on their sewing projects, while the teacher, Miss Helen Lambert, was organizing patterns at her desk. Serena's fingers were speckled with sewing-needle pricks. It was no secret that sewing wasn't exactly Serena's forte.

"This stinks," the blonde said darkly as she rested her chin on the table. She looked at all the pricks on her fingers and moaned. She wouldn't be able to play arcade games for days with her fingers in this condition.

Molly continued her own sewing. "Don't start crying to me," she answered. "Why weren't you wearing a thimble?"

"I was wearing a thimble."

Molly raised an eyebrow. "And you still managed to prick your thumb?"

"Not just my thumb." Serena lifted up her hand and examined it. "My ring finger twice, my index finger a whole lot, my middle finger some, and my pinkie a couple of times. And I pricked my palm a lot, too. I think my pin cushion has less holes in it."

Molly whistled and poked her needle through the fabric. "Only you, Serena. Hearing

HALL ROOM

things like that makes me want to keep you away from scissors."

"Have you no sympathy?!"

Molly smiled. "OK, Serena. I'll take you out for ice cream after we get out of here. Will that make you feel better?"

Serena's eyes lit up. All right! Immediately forgetting her injured hand, she slammed it palm-down on the table. "Oh, Molly, I knew you loved me!"

"Wasn't that hand hurting a second ago?"

"Huh? Oh, right. Ow!"

Molly rolled her eyes.

The last bell of the day rang through the hallway, and the students hastily shoved their materials back into their cubbies and grabbed their backpacks. Serena was a pro at ditching classes anyway, so she was the first to the door with her backpack on. She beckoned Molly excitedly.

"C'mon, c'mon!" she cried. "Molly! Baskin Robbins, remember?"

Molly frowned and neatly folded the skirt she had been stitching. "I've got to remember to quit treating Serena to sweets," she mumbled to

scouts on film

herself. "She sure doesn't need the extra sugar."

"Molly, come on! I only had four cookies and a piece of cake at lunch, and my energy needs a major boost!"

Molly sighed. "I rest my case."

Happily digging her spoon into a large cup of Death By Chocolate, Serena leaned back in her chair and grinned. "Thank God I made it through Home Economics," she said, shoving the spoon into her mouth. She had thought it would never end.

Molly rested her elbows on the table and sipped her lemonade. "It has been pretty boring in there lately," she agreed. "Probably because Miss Lambert's given us so many workdays. I don't think she's taught us anything new in over a month."

"Well, I wouldn't complain about not learning." Serena licked her spoon. "The less thinking I have to do in school, the better."

"Spoken like a true flunky."

"Come on, are you my friend or what?"

Molly stirred her straw. "I wonder what it is,

HALLOWEEN

though. Now that I think of it, Miss Lambert has been kind of out of it."

"Need gossip?" asked a squeaky voice. "You're in luck, because your number one gossip source has just arrived!"

Serena began to grind her teeth. Great! Now her lovely ice cream afternoon was going to be ruined.

Melvin Grier sprang out of nowhere like a jack-in-the-box, grinning widely. He pushed his coke-bottle glasses further up his nose. "May I join the party?" he asked cheerfully.

Serena glared at him. "We're having a girl chat, thank you very much. No boys allowed."

Melvin frowned. Serena sighed. He looked so dejected. It was obvious Melvin had a crush on her, and when he let it show, it totally embarrassed her. If he could learn to control his feelings a little more, she wouldn't have to threaten to pound him so much.

But, she also didn't want to hurt his feelings. Taking a breath, she set her jaw. "Kidding, Melvin. You can stay if you want."

Melvin clapped his hands happily and

scouts on film

pulled up a chair. "Oh, Serena," he said, taking her arm. "I knew you didn't hate me!"

"You can stay, but you can't touch."

He immediately let go. "Right."

Molly pushed her plate of cookies at Melvin, inviting him to take one. "Did you say you knew something about Miss Lambert?" she asked.

Melvin bit into a cookie and nodded. "Yeah," he mumbled. "She's getting married."

Serena shot up in her chair. "NO WAY!" she screamed.

Startled, Melvin tipped back his chair. He shrieked as he started to fall backwards, but Molly grabbed the chair and pushed it upright. Melvin grabbed his chest and took deep breaths.

Serena winced. She needed to watch how loud she screamed. "Sorry, Melvin."

Melvin swallowed hard. "Uh, yeah," he said shakily. "She's, uh, getting married in a month or two. That's why she's been so out-there lately." He grabbed another cookie and pushed it into his mouth. "She's mawwyng a reawwy coow guy," he said, spraying crumbs as he spoke. "A computer pwogwammer. He designs webpages, too!"

HALLO MOON

"You're kidding!" Serena bonked her head on the table and moaned. "Now I have to be totally jealous of her!"

Molly raised her eyebrows. "Why? You have a thing for computer programmers?"

Serena made a face. "Of course not. You know I'm after the hot, athletic type." She sighed and folded her arms. "I'm jealous because she's going to have a totally beautiful wedding."

Molly laughed. "Oh, I get it," she said with a grin. "It's Serena, the helpless romantic, always dreaming about having a beautiful wedding with a beautiful gown and beautiful flowers in a beautiful chapel."

"Don't forget about the beautiful cake," Serena said, pointing at Molly with her spoon. She grinned wickedly. "And the beautiful groom."

Melvin turned red. "Well, Serena," he said, moving closer. "If you really want to get married, you know, there is--"

"Don't even think about it."

Melvin scooted away, head hanging down. "Sorry."

Molly leaned back in her chair. "Serena,

scouts on film

come on. You're probably not going to get married for at least ten years. Now's no time to be worrying about weddings."

Serena frowned. Yeah, she knew she probably wouldn't be walking down the aisle for a long time. But that didn't mean she couldn't daydream about a wedding now.

"I wish," she said with a sigh, tilting her head to the sky. "I wish there was some way I could enjoy the thrill of a wedding now. I just want a piece of the action."

Molly smiled. "With all of Miss Lambert's wedding plans...who knows? Maybe you will get a chance to experience some of the wedding magic."

She scowled. "Just don't run off and elope or anything. I don't know how I'd ever be able to explain that to your dad."

Miss Lambert walked down the sidewalk that afternoon, one thin hand holding her purse against her stomach. She set her glasses gently on the tip of her nose as her eyes wandered over the many shops lining the sidewalk. The afternoon sun

glinted off the large windows, and her transparent reflection matched her step and traveled along the glass.

"Helen! Helen! Hi!"

Miss Lambert turned in surprise. She blinked, trying to focus her blue eyes. "Patricia?"

Ms. Patricia Haruna, Serena's homeroom teacher and the unofficial (and unwanted) love consultant of the faculty of Crossroads Junior High, shot down the sidewalk, practically tackling the timid sewing teacher.

"Helen!" Ms. Haruna cried, shaking the thin woman. "Samantha just told me the news. Why didn't you tell me you were getting married? This is fantastic!"

Miss Lambert blushed. "Well," she said quietly, "Herbert and I were just planning a small wedding, and I didn't want to--"

"Are you kidding me?" Ms. Haruna shook Miss Lambert so hard the sewing teacher's teeth rattled. "You are not having a small wedding! Not if Patricia Angelica Haruna has anything to say about it!"

Miss Lambert's eyes darted nervously.

scouts on film

"Come on," Ms. Haruna declared, grabbing Miss Lambert's wrist. "I am taking you on the biggest pre-wedding shopping spree in history! We've got to get gowns, flowers, a cake, a band, invitations of course..."

Ms. Haruna half-dragged Miss Lambert down the sidewalk, all the while rattling off about all the things they had to buy. Miss Lambert swallowed, too surprised to even try and free herself.

Neither of them noticed the red Ferrari parked by the curb, nor the man in the car watching them. He brushed his long, wavy brown hair over his shoulder and looked in his rearview mirror.

Slipping on a pair of Ray-Bans over his dark blue eyes, Nephrite, general of the evil Negaverse, started the car.

In an abandoned mansion deep in Crossroads Woods, Nephrite called up his holographic star chart. The map spread out along the mansion's crumbling walls, tiny stars on the chart glittering as glowing holographic planets traveled along wide orbits.

HALO MOON

Nephrite closed his eyes. "Stars," he called. "My Queen Beryl demands the energy of the vibrant citizens of Crossroads. Your movement controls the energy of all humans. Show me the human who is near her energy's peak!"

The stars on the map began to move. Slowly, they gathered in the center of the chart and formed a glowing circle. The circle flickered several colors, then produced the image of Miss Lambert.

Nephrite opened his eyes. "As I suspected," he murmured. "The school teacher with the upcoming wedding." He turned to the mansion's broken stained-glass window and stared out at the night sky.

Nephrite narrowed his eyes. "The stars have spoken," he said, closing his hands. "The bride shall be my next target."



Chapter 2

Reverend Run-In

Serena walked home from school the next day alone. It was one of the few days her pet cat, Luna, hadn't come to walk with her.

Which wasn't necessarily a bad thing. Luna wasn't just Serena's cat, she was Serena's guardian cat. The little furball could talk, so that meant she could nag. By night, Serena was the Champion of Justice and leader of the Sailor Scout team, and little Luna loved to remind Serena of her responsibilities.

Serena stretched out her arms. At least walking home on her own meant she'd get a little day-

dreaming time. She didn't like thinking superhero thoughts all the time. It was too stressful.

"Oh my God!"

Serena stopped in her tracks. Just ahead, a young woman stared in amazement at a sign in front of Crossroads Chapel.

The woman blushed and clapped her hands happily. "George will be thrilled!" she exclaimed. "Hawaii would be a perfect place for a honeymoon!"

She quickly scrawled her name on the posted list, then clutched her purse and ran down the sidewalk. Serena had to quickly sidestep to avoid being run over.

"What's up with her?" Serena wondered, watching the woman jet down the sidewalk and fly around a turn. She scratched her head and turned her attention back to the chapel. "Something going on at the chapel?"

"You can say that again!" said a voice. Two hands clutched Serena's shoulders from behind and spun her around.

Serena blinked in surprise. A man, dressed in the white attire of a reverend but sporting

scouts on film

slicked-back hair and a pair of dark sunglasses, grinned widely at her.

"Who are you?" Serena asked, pulling from his hold. She narrowed her eyes skeptically. There was something sleazy about this guy.

The man gestured to a brightly colored nametag pinned to his outfit. "Reverend L," he said, fashioning his fingers like guns and pointing them at her. "The 'L' stands for love, sweetheart." Bang!

Definitely sleazy! No way that guy was a real reverend. "I'm out of here," Serena said flatly, stepping away. "Tell it to someone who cares."

"Hey!" he said as she started walking away. "You must have an older girlfriend who's getting married, right? Come on, you girls all stick together, right?" He ran in front of her again, holding out his hands and raising an eyebrow. "What would your friend say to a honeymoon in Hawaii?"

Serena made a face. "With you? Get real."

"Not with me, sweetheart--with the groom. Totally free." He straightened his collar and grinned. "I just bought Crossroads Chapel to run privately. The free honeymoon's part of the promotion."

CHAPTER FOUR

"Listen, I don't care what you're--huh?" Serena stopped in her tracks. She turned around slowly, eyes wide. "Did you say a free honeymoon for the bride and groom?"

Reverend L smiled. "I sure did. All the lucky girl's got to do is make the most beautiful wedding dress in town and win my contest."

Serena couldn't believe it. Sew a wedding dress, get a free trip to Hawaii? She'd get to make and model a wedding dress like a real bride without having to get married! It's exactly what she had been looking for! The free trip was just an unexpected perk.

"Sign me up!" Serena cried, grabbing the man's shoulders. "I am so entering!"

The man ruffled his eyebrows. "The contest's only open to girls who plan on getting married in my chapel," he said lowly. "Got to pay the bills, you know. What are you, like, 10? Get an older friend to enter."

"I am not 10," Serena said angrily, pushing him as she let go. "I'm 14. And the contest's open to girls who'll get married someday in your chapel, right?"

scouts on film

"Well, right, but--"

"So sign me up." Serena thrust her nose in the air. "I'll get married in your chapel someday."

The man scowled. "That's not enough of a guarantee," he replied sharply. "Some little girl who may get married ten years from now is no good. Unless you plan on getting married in the next few years, you can't enter."

Serena swallowed. How was she going to weasel her way into this contest? "I'll have you know that I'm on the market for wedding dresses right now," she answered a little shakily. "I'm, uh, thinking about getting married soon."

Reverend L lowered his sunglasses unbelievably. "You?" he asked. "You've got to be kidding me."

"My family's old-fashioned," she snapped. "I'm seeing a guy seriously right now, and there's a chance we could get married within the year. Will that let me enter your contest?"

The Reverend held his chin. "Yeah," he said. "Yeah, I guess you can enter."

Serena clapped her hands. "Great. Where do I sign my--"

CHAPTER FOUR

"But I have got to see this guy."

Serena froze. The color drained from her face. "Wh-what?"

Reverend L crossed his arms. "You heard me. You can enter when I see the guy."

Serena swallowed. What was it her mother always said? "Oh, what a tangled web we weave..."

"He's out of t-town," she stuttered. "He won't be back for a few weeks."

Reverend L snorted. "Bologna. You're making it up." He grinned and straightened his collar again. "But hey, if you're really on the wedding market, I'm looking for a good wife myself. I'm a great cook, you know."

Serena suddenly felt very sick.

"Hey Blondie," said a voice. "Shouldn't you be at home studying? Raye told me about that last English quiz of yours."

Serena whipped around. Dark-haired Darien, in his school uniform with tie undone, stood behind her. He cocked his head and smiled. "Don't tell me I have to drag you home by the ear myself."

Serena ignored the sudden thudding in her

scouts on film

heart and grabbed his arm. "Him."

Both Reverend L and Darien stared at her. "What?" they said in unison.

"Him." Serena clutched Darien tighter to try to keep from shaking. It only made things worse. "I'm marrying him."

Reverend L raised an eyebrow. Darien, for the first time since Serena had met him, had nothing to say. But based on the way his eyes were bug-ging out, Serena knew that silence couldn't last long.

"Excuse us," Serena mumbled, dragging Darien away. As soon as the two of them were out of hearing distance, Darien grabbed her wrist.

"What is wrong with you?" he asked sharply. "What are you trying to pull now?"

Serena could feel her heart pounding and prayed it wasn't loud enough for him to hear.

"Listen," she said quickly, her hands trembling. "You have to pretend we're thinking about getting married. Otherwise, this guy won't let me enter his wedding dress contest."

Darien sighed and gripped his forehead.

"I'm sorry I asked."

"C'mon," Serena said, taking his arm again.

Her heart's pounding grew worse, so she let go and stepped back. She'd only known Darien for a few months, and in that time, he'd gone out of his way just to tease her. She hated his guts, but for some reason, being near him made her heart race.

Darien focused his ocean-blue eyes on her. "Blondie, you've got to be kidding me. I'm not taking part in whatever crazy lie you've concocted so you can get into some whacko contest."

"It's not a bad lie," Serena said in her defense. "He wants me to get married in his chapel someday, and I will. He just won't be convinced unless he sees me serious with a guy now."

Darien rolled his eyes.

"Please?" Serena pouted and tried to look as cute and puppy-doggish as she could. Then she suddenly realized Darien was the last guy in the world who would change his mind after seeing her "cutely pathetic" look, so she just slumped her shoulders.

"Please, Darien?"

scouts on film

Darien relaxed. "You must be serious if you actually said 'please' to me."

Serena glanced back at Reverend L. "If you don't want to do it for the contest, do it for my well-being." She nudged a little closer to Darien. "I don't feel comfortable being a girl alone with that guy."

Darien took one look at Reverend L and winced. "Ouch. Yeah, I see what you mean."

"So?"

Darien sighed. "I think I'm too nice to you," he said, taking her hand and turning to the Reverend. "So, what? Should I put my arm around you or something?"

"No," Serena said sharply as they walked to Reverend L. With the way her heart was racing holding Darien's hand, she was afraid being in his arms would make her heart burst.

"Give me that, you little witch!" Ms. Haruna grabbed one end of the length of fabric and bared her teeth. "I saw it first!"

The woman who held the other end lifted a long-nailed hand and snarled. "Let go or I'll claw your eyes out!"

Ms. Haruna shrieked and started a violent tug-of-war while dozens of other women in the flower shop screamed and fought over the dwindling supply of fabric. Miss Lambert, standing meekly in the corner, fiddled nervously with her glasses.

"It's a madhouse," she whispered incredulously as she clutched her purse against her stomach. A screaming woman with a measuring ruler ran by. Miss Lambert bit her lip nervously.

"It's that contest."

Miss Lambert looked up. Nephrite, dressed as his alter ego Maxfield Stanton, stood with his hands in his pockets. He turned his dark blue eyes to her.

Miss Lambert blushed and looked down. "I didn't know so many women were entering," she offered.

"Dozens. The prize is too appealing." He raised an eyebrow. "Aren't you the local junior high sewing teacher? Surely you must be entering as well."

Miss Lambert's blush deepened. "I was thinking about it," she admitted. "But I don't think

scouts on film

I could win. Besides, there's hardly any decent fabric left with all these other women here."

Nephrite looked around. He stepped forward suddenly and bent beside a measuring table. He magically produced an abandoned roll of fabric from underneath the table and held it up.

"How's this?" he asked.

The fabric was the most beautiful shade of glittering light pink, and felt as soft as cashmere. Miss Lambert held the roll, looking at it with wide eyes.

"Oh my god," she whispered. "Somebody missed this?"

"Must've been overlooked," Nephrite said, straightening and holding out his hand. "Let me look at it more closely for you. We need to make sure it doesn't have any blemishes."

Miss Lambert handed him the roll. Nephrite held his hand under the fabric and dark energy formed in his palm. He secretly sealed an evil symbol into the cloth before handing it back to her.

"Looks fine," he said. "I'm sure you'll make a beautiful dress out of it."

Miss Lambert's eyes darkened as she stared

at the fabric. A strange grin spread across her face.

"I can feel my creative juices rising," she said, gripping the cloth. "Yes! Yes! I can make the most beautiful dress in town with this! I'll win that contest for sure!"

Nephrite slid his hands into his pockets and smiled slightly. "Then you'd better get home and start right away." His eyes glimmered coldly. "You don't want to waste your energy, now do you?"



Chapter 3

Doom Dress

"Serena is trying to sew a wedding dress."

Raye Hino, dressed in her traditional Shinto priestess garb, stopped sweeping the Cherry Hill Temple's grounds and looked up. She narrowed her eyes. "You're kidding me."

Amy Anderson shook her head. She was slim and pretty, with short, dark blue hair and large navy eyes. She sat on one of the temple's long porches, her book bag resting beside her.

"She signed up for that contest Crossroads Chapel is having. Oh, wait. They changed the name of the place." Amy thought for a moment. "I mean the 'Chapel of Heavenly Love'."

HALLOWEEN

"Sounds classy." Raye began sweeping again. Her waist-long midnight hair and dark eyes glimmered purple in the afternoon sunlight. "Let me guess. It's privately run, and the guy running it isn't really a reverend."

Amy sighed. "I don't know why Serena gets into these things. The girl's got a D in Home Economics. There's no way she'll be able to make the wedding dress she wants, or any wedding dress at all, for that matter."

"I take it she tried to get you to help?"

"Bingo."

Raye shook her head. She and Amy were Sailor Mars and Sailor Mercury. Serena, as Sailor Moon, was their leader.

"I can't believe Luna let her sign up for that. Serena needs to focus on her Sailor business more, and I won't even get started with her grades. A huge project that requires skill she doesn't have and time she should be saving is the last thing she needs."

"Luna wasn't there to stop her." Amy rested her chin in her palm and frowned. "And Serena can't back out now, not after the tale she spun to get in."

scouts on film

"Tale?"

"She had Darien pretend to be her fiancé."

Raye's broom stopped. She stared at the ground for a moment then smiled dryly.

"Now I'm starting to wish I had been there," the priestess said as she began to sweep once more. "That's probably the only time I could've seen Serena and Darien as a married couple."

Amy shrugged.

Molly sighed and shook her head. "You should've known better."

Serena tried her puppy-dog pathetic face, but once again realized it would do her no good. She latched onto Molly's arm desperately.

"Come on," she wailed. "Molly, you're totally my last hope. I need help making my wedding dress! Amy ditched me, Melvin keeps getting ideas whenever we're alone, and I won't even try Raye." Serena scowled. "I'm sure she'd prefer locking me in a closet to letting me go to the contest."

Luna, walking by Serena's feet, snorted. Serena glared down at the cat.

"Look," Molly said as the two girls and the feline turned a corner. "I don't have the time to help

you with an impossible project right now." She raised an eyebrow. "Why don't you just get your fiancé to help?"

Serena grimaced. "How come everybody seems to know about that?"

"Rica saw you."

Serena slapped a hand to her forehead. Rica Kelton was the biggest gossip in school next to Ms. Haruna. Serena realized she should've done a "Rica check" before pulling that embarrassing stunt with Darien.

"My life just doesn't want to be easy," Serena mumbled.

Just then, a short, bald man with a bouquet of flowers rushed past them. Serena and Molly watched him huff his way up to a small house and hurriedly knock on the door.

"Wonder what's up with him?" Serena muttered to Molly. "Poor little guy looks flustered."

The short man's cheeks were pink, and his big brown eyes were full of worry. His small fist rapped incessantly on the door.

"Helen!" he called. "Helen, it's me, Herbert! What's wrong? Why won't you talk to me on the phone? Please let me in, Helen!"

scouts on film

Helen? That couldn't mean...

"Isn't Miss Lambert's first name Helen?" Molly whispered. "You don't suppose he's the guy she's marrying?"

The door suddenly jerked open, and Herbert nearly fell in. The woman in the doorway scowled down at him.

"What are you doing here?" she hissed.

Serena nearly gagged. The woman in the door was Miss Lambert, but she had totally changed! Gone were the glasses and petit dresses, replaced by torn-up blue jeans and a smock. Her face creased with anger lines, and her blue eyes had turned a sinister shade darker.

What's happened to her? Serena wondered. Miss Lambert would never wear such crummy clothes, nor had she ever looked so cruel. The way Miss Lambert grimaced at Herbert made Serena wince in sympathetic agony.

Herbert shakily held up the flowers. "B-b-but I brought these for you," he said. "I don't know what's wrong, Helen, but if you tell me, maybe I can help. I hate to see you angry like this."

"Angry?" Miss Lambert sneered. With a whip of her arm, she knocked away the bouquet.

Herbert stepped back, stunned.

Miss Lambert clenched her fists. "What are you talking about, you silly little man? I'm happier than I've ever been. I'm finally happy because I've realized what a waste of time you are!"

Herbert gasped. Serena, Molly, and Luna could only stare in shock.

"What?" Herbert held out his hands. "Helen, please, if I've done something wrong--"

"You are what's wrong!" Miss Lambert shoved him out of the doorway, nearly knocking him to the ground. She spat at his feet.

"I don't know what came over me when I said I'd marry you, but I've gotten wiser since then. You're a little wimp who simply doesn't understand my grand vision." She thrust a pointed finger at him. "Get out of here, Herbert. I've found my calling, you see, and I don't need you anymore. In fact, I never want to see you again!"

She slammed the door in Herbert's face.

Serena, Molly, and Luna ran behind a building and hid. Serena didn't know about Molly and Luna, but she hid because she couldn't stand to see the look on poor Herbert's face.

Molly covered her mouth. "I don't believe

scouts on film

it," she whispered. "Serena, Miss Lambert just canceled her wedding! How could she be so mean to that poor guy?"

Serena thought hard. Miss Lambert hadn't acted like herself at all. There was something awfully suspicious about this. She glanced down at Luna, who nodded in agreement.

Serena licked her lips. It seemed like the Negaverse was at it again.

Inside the small house, Miss Lambert feverishly ran the beautiful pink fabric through her sewing machine. Her worktable lamp, the only light on in the house, bathed her in a dull orange hue.

"I don't need him," Miss Lambert said, spitting. "I don't need him! I don't need any man! I don't need anyone! This dress is going to be the most incredible dress ever, and after it's completed, I won't need anything else!"

Miss Lambert pulled out the dress and held it up. The black sashes she had sewn on made the light pink dress seem harsh and cruel. She grinned evilly.

"Perfect!" she cried, spinning around. "It's

perfect!"

While the sewing teacher cackled maniacally, the small symbol of evil on the fabric flickered red.

"So when's the contest?"

Serena shifted the phone on her shoulder. "Next Wednesday. Amy checked out the sign-up sheet, and there're 35 other women signed up."

Raye was silent for a moment on the other end of the phone. "That's a lot of entrants, not to mention the people who will come to watch." A pause. "I wonder if we should move now."

"Luna says we're not positive Miss Lambert's been possessed by the Negaverse, so we should wait before moving in," Serena sighed. "But I'm worried."

"I know you are, but Luna's probably right in this case. Relax. We'll be prepared for anything when that contest starts, so we should be able to stop any attack if one does come."

Serena mumbled an affirmative. She stared down at the bunnies and moons on her pink and purple quilt.

"Serena." Raye's voice softened. "I'm sorry

scouts on film

you couldn't make a wedding dress and enter the contest. And that all of this had to happen."

"Thanks, Raye. I'll call you later."

"Get some sleep. Good night."

Serena put her cell phone in her lap and clicked the OFF button. Gripping her ankles, she leaned back on her bed and tilted her face to the ceiling.

She knew she should be more thankful. She was sure Raye had thought the contest was a stupid idea. Raye's sympathy was her way of showing Serena that she cared.

But that still didn't make Serena feel much better. She closed her eyes.

The Negaverse was ruining her dream and her teacher's future. How much of Serena's life was the Negaverse going to destroy before it was happy? And why did she always feel as if this weren't the first time the Negaverse was trying to destroy her?



Chapter 4

Arachnophobia

Wednesday came quickly. Serena, Amy, Raye, and Luna went directly to the chapel after school to prepare for the contest. The place had already filled with the anxious women contestants and, of course, those who came to watch the competition.

Amy checked her watch. "Half an hour," she announced, brushing a strand of dark blue hair behind her ear. "We'd better go around and see what we can find out. We should try and get a good feel for the place."

Raye nodded and picked up Luna. "Right,"

scouts on film

she said, putting the cat in Amy's arms. "Amy, you go with Luna."

Serena leaned against the wall of the chapel and stared at the ground. "So it's me and you together, Raye?"

Amy's face was concerned. "Are you going to be OK, Serena?"

Serena sighed. She had really wanted to make that wedding dress. She wanted to feel like a bride, even if it was only just for a moment. She had wanted to know what it felt like to be a part of a beautiful wedding.

"What did you tell the Reverend?" Amy asked.

Serena shrugged. "I said Darien fell off a cliff."

"Still bitter, I see."

Serena scowled. "Well I'm sorry," she snapped. "I'm just sick of the Negaverse crashing my life. I really wanted this."

Raye let out a breath. "You can still have it, Serena," she said. "We need someone to investigate from the inside."

Serena looked up, eyes wide. "What do you

mean?"

"Your Luna Pen." Raye gestured to Serena's pocket. "Use it to transform into a bride. You can make your dress as fancy as you want, just so long as you can investigate in it."

Serena couldn't believe her ears. She was going to compete after all! And the Luna Pen could make a much more beautiful dress than she would have been able to sew.

"Oh, Raye, I knew you loved me deep down!" Serena cried as she pulled the pen out of her pocket. She laughed. "You know, you're not really a stuck-up, bossy drill sergeant all the time."

Raye scowled. "Do you want to make the dress or not? We could always just put Luna backstage to investigate for yo--"

"MOON POWER! TRANSFORM INTO THE MOST GORGEOUS PRIZE-WINNING BRIDE!"

Serena closed her eyes and let the pink and orange smoke engulf her body. When she looked down at her dress, she shrieked happily.

It was the most beautiful dress she had ever seen--and she had seen some gorgeous dresses in her time. It was completely made of thick, shim-

scouts on film

mering white silk, with pink sashes in all the right places. Her hair was done up in multiple buns on her head covered by a thin lace veil. She had elbow-length white silk gloves, crystal earrings, a pink choker, and glittering white high heels. She spun around happily and nearly tripped on the heels, but Raye grabbed her arm and helped her regain her balance.

"Oh, it's perfect!" Serena said with a squeal. "It's so gorgeous! I really do look like a real bride!"

Amy smiled. "We figured you deserve to have your dreams fulfilled every once in a while. Just don't forget that you do have to investigate, OK?"

Serena gave Amy a tight hug and nearly squashed Luna. "Sure sure, I'll investigate," Serena said, running to the back of the stage. She waved cheerfully. "I love you guys! Even you, Luna!"

As Serena disappeared backstage, Luna raised an eyebrow. "Would you look at that," the cat murmured. "She even loves me."

Amy laughed. "Serena must be pretty happy if she admitted that."

Raye smiled slightly.

A half hour later, Serena stood on stage with the 35 other contestants. She scanned the large audience for Amy, Raye, and Luna, but couldn't find them.

Where were they? Miss Lambert hadn't been around when the contestants had lined up on stage, and the judging was about to begin. Serena hoped Amy or Raye had had more luck.

Just then, Reverend L came on stage with a microphone. Serena tried to act natural as the audience clapped.

"Thank you, ladies and gents," Reverend L said, grinning. "Nice to see so many happy faces. I hope you've all brought your cameras, because there are some lovely gowns here this afternoon!"

Serena bit her lip. No Amy, no Raye, no Luna, no Miss Lambert. What was going on?

"Our panel of judges will begin their judging shortly," Reverend L explained. He pulled the curtain cord. "But first, let's see what prize our lucky bride will win today!"

The curtain squeaked open, and everybody gasped. Serena choked.

Miss Lambert, in her sinister pink and black

scouts on film

dress, stood in front of a huge picture of Hawaii. She put one hand on her hip and laughed.

"Look at all these prissy wannabes," she mocked, glaring at the other contestants. "Your dresses are all inferior. Get off the stage!"

The contestants looked at Miss Lambert in shock while the audience began to murmur. Serena held her breath. Miss Lambert was so twisted with hate, she looked like a different person. She had to be possessed. This was bad news!

"Hey!" Reverend L cried, running to Miss Lambert. "What do you think you're doing? First showing up late and then insulting the other--"

With one backhanded slap, she sent the Reverend flying. He fell off the stage and crashed into several members of the audience.

"Nobody dare stop me." Miss Lambert's eyes burned as she raised a hand. "My dress is perfect. Anyone who says otherwise will be destroyed!"

Nephrite's symbol, still embedded in the fabric of her dress, blazed out. It began drawing a white light out of everyone present.

"She's armed!" Reverend L shouted, pushing

his way through the crowd. "Let me out of here before she...before she..." He trailed off as his eyes drooped. He crumpled to the floor just as the members of the audience began to collapse.

Serena quickly dove backstage to avoid the energy draining beam. Safely behind the curtain, she peeked out. All of the contestants and audience members were falling unconscious, and Miss Lambert stood there laughing wickedly.

Serena's eyebrows furrowed. It was the Negaverse, all right. Nobody else drained energy from an entire crowd. She had to save Miss Lambert!

The possessed teacher in question suddenly turned. She pulled aside the curtain, and Serena stumbled back.

"You little brat!" Miss Lambert screamed. "You think your dress is better than mine, don't you? Don't you?!"

Serena spread her feet and clenched her fists. Where were the other Sailor Scouts when she needed them? "Miss Lambert!" she cried. "Snap out of it! It's me--Serena!"

Miss Lambert snarled. "I don't know you.

scouts on film

Off the stage, brat!" She shot a black ray beam at Serena, and the Champion of Justice dove just in time. Serena scrambled to her feet and clenched her teeth.

"Don't worry, Miss Lambert," she called as she thrust her hand toward the ceiling. "I'll save you! MOON PRISM POWER MAKE-UP!"

In the mansion in Crossroads Woods, Nephrite's eyes narrowed. The picture of Miss Lambert on his star chart had turned red.

"It's about time," he muttered, holding up a palm. "Tegabow, servant of the Negaverse, I command you to come forth and drain this woman's energy!"

Serena closed her eyes and let the rainbow-colored lights wrap around her. Her silk dress vanished as a white leotard, blue skirt, blue sailor collar, white elbow-length gloves, and red knee-high boots formed on her body. Moon earrings clicked onto her ears, red hair pieces snapped onto her hair buns, and a red choker and golden tiara slid across her throat and forehead. The transformation

HALLOWEEN

ended, and the lights faded away. Serena, now Sailor Moon, took her super-hero stance.

"Let go of Miss Lambert!" Serena shouted, pointing at the possessed woman. "Negaverse, release her or you will regret it!"

Miss Lambert suddenly screamed. The evil mark on her dress grew bright, and a black bolt of energy shot from it. Miss Lambert collapsed as the energy began to form into the shape of a giant demon.

Serena gulped. "Me and my big mouth," she muttered.

The demon formed as a six-foot female with spider eyes, a spider's back, and eight hairy arms. She chuckled evilly.

"Afraid of spiders, little girl?" she asked, showing her eight hands. "How about we play and find out?"

It took all of Serena's willpower not to turn tail and jet out of there. She hated spiders! She backed away slowly, trying to look confident while keeping herself from shaking with fear. The she-spider was totally revolting!

"You have r-ruined the life of an honest w-

scouts on film

woman," Serena stuttered. "I am S-Sailor Moon, Ch-champion of J-justice and d-defender of hopeful brides, and on behalf of the moon, you're punished."

Tegabow snorted and shot thick, sticky webs out of her palms. They wrapped around Serena, and the super-hero shrieked.

"EEEEEEEEEW!" Serena frantically fought to get out of the webs. "THEY'RE SO SLIMY! GET THEM OFF! I HATE SPIDERS! SOMEBODY HELP!"

Tegabow laughed. "Go ahead and squirm, little insect. You can't--"

"MERCURY BUBBLES BLAST!"

Thick bubbles filled the room quickly, forming a stifling fog. Tegabow coughed and stepped back.

"What is this?" the demon shouted. "Who did that?"

"MARS FIRE IGNITE!"

Flames roared through the room and broke through Tegabow's webs. Serena was able to squirm free from the destroyed bonds as she fervently wiped away the slime on her arms and

SAILOR MOON

torso.

"Ew, gross!" she cried. "I'm still so slimy! Ew ew ew!"

"How about a 'thank you?'" Sailor Mars asked flatly as she jumped onto the stage. Sailor Mercury, with Luna on her shoulder, jumped down beside her.

Tegabow snarled and backed up. "So you're the Sailor brats I keep hearing about?"

Amy pointed a finger at the monster. "I don't know if you've seen a mirror lately, but you might want to hold back on the insults."

"Indeed." Raye brushed her hair over her shoulder and took a fighting stance. "We're the Sailor Scouts, defenders of the innocent, and we will not allow you to--"

"MOON TIARA ACTION!"

Serena's weapon, the glowing discus that was her tiara, shot by Raye before the priestess could finish. The tiara slammed into Tegabow and vaporized her as she screamed in agony. Serena ran to the neat pile of dust that had been Tegabow and began stomping furiously on it.

"You disgusting thing!" she shouted. "I'll

scouts on film

stomp you until you're not even dust! I hate spiders! I hate spiders! I hate spiders!"

Amy ran to Serena and grabbed her. "Sailor Moon, stop!" she cried. "The demon's gone. You're going to ruin the heels of your boots if you don't relax, you know!"

Serena angrily spat on the pile and turned away. She shuddered. "Gross."

Luna's eyes widened. "Goodness," she murmured. "Well, good job defeating the monster, Sailor Moon, but...you've never been so vehement before."

"We've never had to fight a spider before, Luna." Serena squealed unhappily and shook her head. She hated spiders! She couldn't believe she had been wrapped up in a spider's web! Gross gross gross!

Raye furrowed her eyebrows. "Maybe we should ask the Negaverse to send more spider monsters. Sure makes things quicker."

Amy winced. "I just hope no kid dresses up like a spider and goes to Serena's house next Halloween."

Serena shivered. The next spider that

crawled along her ceiling had better watch out. She wasn't going to have any mercy for spiders after this.

A few weeks later, Serena, Amy, Raye, and Luna watched a happy Miss Lambert run out of the Chapel of Heavenly Love with her short groom.

Amy smiled. "It really is fortunate that everyone at the contest thought the attack was a dream," she commented.

"And that the contest was held again so an unpossessed Miss Lambert could win it." Raye nodded her head approvingly at Miss Lambert's elaborate white gown. "She deserved to win. That dress of hers is really beautiful."

Serena sighed. She was happy Miss Lambert had won the contest, but she still wished she could have entered herself. The dress the Luna Pen had made for her had been gorgeous, but she hadn't gotten to wear it long.

She looked longingly at the Luna Pen in her hands. "Guys?" she asked. "Are you sure I can't make that dress one more--"

"No," all three said in unison.

scouts on film

Serena shoved the pen back in her pocket. Sailor business only, huh? Party poopers.

Miss Lambert laughed happily and threw her bouquet. Serena's eyes lit up. If she couldn't dress up like a bride, catching that bouquet would be the next best thing!

"I got it!" she cried as she ran for the flowers.

Ms. Haruna rushed past her. "No, it's mine!" the teacher shouted as she and Serena jumped at the same time.

The bouquet juggled just above their fingertips for a moment, then flew to land in Amy's arms.

Serena whipped around, jaw slack. "Amy?"

Amy blushed and looked at the bouquet. "Uh-oh," she mumbled. "What's this supposed to mean?"

"Traditionally, it means you'll be the next to get married." Raye smiled. "But in this case, I think it just means you've got one very angry Serena to deal with."

Amy gave a weak smile. "In that case," she replied, "she can have it."



Chapter 5

Photography Fanatic

Serena settled her lunch bag in her lap and rubbed her hands happily. Lunchtime! Quite possibly it's the best time of the day. Those precious 45 minutes where she could ditch her classes and forget about school amidst the bliss of sandwiches and juice boxes. Serena felt that if there were a heaven, it would be a place where it was lunchtime all the time.

"Are you going to open that bag, or just stare at it?"

Serena threw a glare in Molly's direction. "You're ruining the moment, Molly."

scouts on film

Molly rolled her eyes and bit into her sandwich. She, Serena, and Amy sat in the sunny courtyard of Crossroads Junior High. Amy had often said how nice it would be if Raye could join them in their lunchtime get-togethers, but Raye went to a private school. Serena always thought having Raye boss her around after school was enough Raye for one day.

Amy sipped juice from a thermos and flipped a page of her newspaper. "Did you take your math test last period, Serena?"

Serena made a face and delicately unwrapped the plastic from her egg salad sandwich. "Amy, come on. There's only room in my brain for food thoughts now. Unfood thoughts must be put off until after lunch."

"Right. Sorry."

Serena picked up her sandwich and bit into it. She cooed contently as egg salad goodness flooded her senses. Picking up her juice box and taking a long sip, she leaned back against the fence and relaxed.

"OK," Serena said, closing her eyes. "The initial bite has been taken. We can begin girl gab now."

Molly sighed. "Great. Thanks for the announcement, Serena."

Amy's eyes, scanning a newspaper page, suddenly widened. "Hey," she said, turning the newspaper to the other girls. "Did you know Peter Fisher won some big photo contest?"

"Really?" Molly leaned over and looked at the article. "Cool. Good for him."

Serena took another bite of her sandwich. "I have fourth period science with him," she mumbled as she chewed. "He's that guy, kind of tall, brown eyes, crazy hair?"

"I think calling his hair 'artistic' would be more tactful, Serena."

Serena swallowed. Whatever. She had always thought Peter's bushy, spiky hair was a little odd, but she guessed it could be called artistic.

"What'd he win for?" she asked as she picked up a cookie.

"His landscape photo collection. It's supposedly quite good."

"Landscapes?" Serena frowned. Landscapes are so boring. If he really was that artistic, Serena thought he could at least photograph more inter-

scouts on film

esting topics.

Just then, a familiar bushy head of hair caught her eye. Well look at this, Serena thought. There he was. She jumped up and waved.

"Peter!" she called. "Hey, Peter, can you come over here?"

Peter turned his head and winced. He walked very slowly over to the three girls.

"Serena," he asked tiredly, "what is it?"

Serena took his hands and pulled him to sit down. "We were reading about you in the newspaper," she explained, pushing a cookie into his palm. "Congratulations!"

Peter pushed the cookie back at her and sighed. "Please, Serena," he said. "Don't talk so loud. I was up all night."

"Really?" Amy cocked her head. "Why?"

Peter gripped his forehead. "I was trying to meditate enough to get my creative energy realigned," he explained. "I worked unusually hard on that prize-winning landscape collection, and my creative balance was thrown off. I could be up for days in order to get the meditation I need to regain my creative equilibrium."

All three girls blinked.

"That's, uh, nice," said Amy, averting her eyes and smiling thinly. "Um, good luck, Peter."

Serena let out a breath. Well, yeah, Peter was a little odd. She'd always found him nice, though, and it seemed that his oddness was really just creativity. So that was OK.

"I think I can help you, Peter," Serena said after a time. "Maybe if you get a new topic to photograph, your creative energy will be reassigned."

"That's realigned," Peter corrected. He sighed. "And I've always done landscapes. My energy may not have the capability to cope with a new creative focus."

"Um...yeah. Whatever. But get this." She grinned brightly. "You could start photographing people. You know--young, beautiful, blonde girls with really cool ponytails and adorable button noses! If you need a supermodel, Peter, you know, I'm right here!"

Molly rolled her eyes. "Could've seen that one coming."

Peter pushed on his temples. "Oh, my poor balance," he said with a moan. "Serena, please.

scouts on film

You're costing me extra days of meditation."

Serena sighed and leaned back against the fence. It didn't look like anyone could get Peter to change his ways. Well, that was OK.

"It was worth a try," she murmured as she picked up her juice.

That evening, Peter squatted on the rocks near the high cliff edge of Crossroads Bay. The setting sun dipped to touch the horizon, painting the clouds bright hues of pink and gold.

"Perfect," Peter whispered as he brought his camera to his face. He carefully adjusted the focus. "The lighting's phenomenal. This shot will be a real gem."

Shifting his position, Peter's foot caught a rock, and he stumbled. With a cry, he crashed to the rocks and slid to the edge of the cliff.

A big hand gripped his arm, keeping him from falling to the water below. Shaking with adrenaline, he looked up at his savior.

Nephrite, a.k.a. Maxfield Stanton, pulled Peter back to the higher rocks. "Are you all right?" he asked as he helped Peter stand.

Peter gripped his chest. "Oh my god! You just saved my life," he said, eyes wide. "How can I repay you?"

"I'm a big fan of your work. Continuing your photography is thanks enough." He looked to the dropped camera that lay near the edge of the cliff. "Is that yours?"

Peter turned. "Thank God," he said, relieved. "It didn't fall." He took a step to get it, but Nephrite stopped him.

"It's dangerous here," Nephrite explained, stepping past Peter. "I'll get it for you."

Nephrite carefully made his way over to the camera and squatted beside it. He picked it up, and, forming dark energy in his palm, sealed one of his symbols onto the lens. He stood and brought the camera back to Peter.

"Here," he said, handing it to the boy. "Why don't you try that shot again?"

Peter accepted the camera with a nod and brought it back to his eye. He sucked in a breath.

"Whoa," he whispered. "My...my creative energy feels like it's balanced again! No, it feels...even stronger!"

scouts on film

Peter quickly snapped a few pictures then stared at his camera. His eyes widened as his lips curled in a crazy smile.

"My creativity is churning inside of me! I've been waiting for a high like this all of my career! I'll start a new collection of photos superior to the last!"

Nephrite patted Peter on the shoulder. "Good to hear it," he said as he walked away. As soon as he was out of earshot, his eyes narrowed.

"Excellent," Nephrite murmured. "The stars were right about this boy being near his energetic peak."

Peter didn't notice Nephrite's departure. The boy laughed and hugged his camera.

"I need new targets," Peter said excitedly, looking around. "New targets that are filled with energy. My new collection will be an energetic display unlike anything the world has ever seen!"

When Serena got home from school the next day, she opened the mailbox outside her door. She pulled out the letters and started shifting through them.

"Let's see...bill--boring, junk mail--boring, bill--boring, letter for Sammy--boring." She furrowed her eyebrows and shuffled faster. Geez, was it just her, or was there never anything good in the mail?

A letter with her name on it caught her eye. Serena tossed the rest of the mail through her front door and quickly tore open the letter.

"From the desk of photographer genius Peter Fisher?" Serena raised her eyebrows. She scanned the letter, and her eyes widened. Was this for real? She quickly read the page again, then let out an excited screech.

"No way!" she cried, clutching the letter to her chest. "Peter's going to have a contest, and I'm invited to participate! He's looking for his own supermodel!"



Chapter 6

What's Wrong?

"Absolutely not."

Serena glared at her cat. "Did I ask your permission?"

Luna sighed. Serena had spent all that day filling out the form for Peter's modeling competition. When she had told Luna about it, the cat had been more than a little frustrated.

"How many of these silly projects have to come along before you understand?" Luna snapped. "I didn't want you entering the wedding dress contest last month, I didn't want you taking those tennis lessons, I didn't want--"

"You don't want me to have a life outside of Sailor Moon, Luna." Serena stuffed her application in an envelope and licked it closed. Sticking one of her trademark bunny stickers on the flap, she got to her feet. "If you want me to understand that I have to take my super-hero duties seriously, you have to understand that I need an active social life. And I want to enter the contest."

"Since when has modeling interested you?" Luna asked as the blonde put a stamp on the letter. "You can have a social life, Serena, but you can't waste your time on every new fad in town!"

Serena scowled. Not everything she entered was a fad! Luna just didn't understand that Serena had a lot of interests. Besides, if she pursued many hobbies at once, she always had an excuse to put off her homework.

"I've always wanted to try modeling." Serena reached for her bedroom door. "This is my chance to check it out."

"Wait!" Luna called. The cat clamped her teeth on a small pink calculator and ran to the girl. She dropped the calculator at Serena's feet.

"This is your new Sailor Scout communica-

scouts on film

tor," Luna said. "You can use it to contact Amy or Raye if you're in danger. But you must only use it for Sailor bus--"

"Sailor business, right." Serena picked up the calculator, shoved it in her pocket, and opened the door. "Great. Thanks, Luna."

The cat ran in front of Serena to try and keep her from leaving. "Wait, Serena!" Luna ordered. "I didn't explain all of the functions yet!"

Serena ran past the cat and jumped down the stairs. She jetted through her front door before Luna could stop her.

"I'll figure the functions out later, Luna!" Serena called as she dashed down the street. "I have to drop this application in the mail now! Bye!"

Luna ran to the Tsukino home's doorway and watched Serena disappear around a corner. The cat stamped a paw angrily.

"That girl!"

Later that afternoon, Serena skipped into Crown Arcade. After putting her application in the mail, she felt like a million bucks. That letter could be her chance to break into modeling!

"Andrew!" Serena called cheerfully, hopping up to the young arcade manager. She grinned widely. "Do you think I'm pretty?"

Andrew Foreman was 17 years old, with dark blond hair and bright green eyes. His smile was adorable enough to catch any girl, and Serena had had a crush on him for quite some time.

"Serena," Andrew said, smiling as he stroked her head affectionately. "Of course I think you're pretty."

Serena giggled. Count on Andrew for some easy self-esteem-boosting flattery. "I'm entering a modeling contest," she said, spinning around. "What do you think? Do I have a chance?"

Andrew laughed. "When did you decide you wanted to be a model?"

"I've always dreamed of being a model. Peter Fisher is having a contest to find himself a supermodel."

Andrew thought about that for a moment. "Right," he said after a time. "Some other girl was in here earlier telling me about that. Peter's that young photographer, huh?"

"Yup. He's a classmate."

scouts on film

Andrew grinned. "Well, I think you can do anything you want, Serena. You've got more drive than any girl I've met."

Serena giggled again and took Andrew's hands. "Oh, Andrew!" she said happily. "You're so supportive! I wish all of my friends were like you," she added, thinking back on naggy Luna and bossy Raye. If all her friends were as encouraging as Andrew, Serena's life would be a whole lot more fun.

"You know, if you two are going to get sticky sweet, just tell me now. I just got fillings and I don't need any more toothaches."

Serena froze at the voice. Oh, great. She turned around, and, sure enough, there stood Darien in the arcade doorway.

Serena scowled as her heart began to pound. Darien always showed up at the worst times. And he was probably going to stay, too--Darien and Andrew were best friends.

Andrew's eyes lit up. "Hey!" he called. "Darien, you actually came to hang with me for once?"

Darien pulled off his Oakleys and shrugged.

HALLOWEEN

He wasn't in his school uniform, and Serena noticed how painfully good he looked in a black turtleneck and khakis.

"Got some time off work these next few weeks, and school's been a little lighter." He smirked. "I figured you were getting lonely without me."

"Andrew will never be lonely," Serena said sharply, holding Andrew's hands more firmly. "He has me."

Darien laughed. "Right," he said sarcastically, slipping his shades into his pocket. He focused his ocean eyes on her. "Tell me something, Blondie. Did I hear you were trying out for some modeling contest?"

"None of your business."

Andrew frowned. "Guys," he pleaded. "Can't you at least pretend to get along?"

Serena sighed angrily. Well, maybe she could put up with Darien for a few minutes, but only for Andrew.

"Yes, I am, Darien," she answered shortly.

"What kind of contest is this, exactly?"

"Peter Fisher needs a supermodel for his

scouts on film

new photography collection."

Darien leaned against a counter. His midnight bangs fluffed slightly with the movement, and Serena's heart jumped. She bit her lip and looked away.

Stupid Darien. Why did he make her feel like this?

"I've read about that kid," Darien said, looking to the floor. "He's a big landscape buff, right? Kind of odd for him to change his focus so suddenly."

Serena looked at him in surprise. There was something weird about the way Darien was staring at the floor, and the tone of his voice was unusual. He sounded almost...suspicious.

"What's wrong with changing his focus?" Serena narrowed her eyes. "Look, Darien, if you have a problem with Peter--"

"I've never met Peter. I was just asking." He brushed a strand of hair from his eye. "I used to model, you know."

Serena blinked. Darien used to model? "No way," she said, shocked.

Andrew laughed. "He sure did. How old

were you, Darien? 14?" The arcade manager leaned against a game and smiled. "His mom showed me the clippings. I can't believe Calvin Klein had you model their young adult line."

Serena's eyes widened. Darien had modeled for such a big name? She held her breath and let her eyes take him in. Well, he was tall and trim, with thick, silky black hair and sharp yet delicate features. And his ocean blue eyes were really...pretty. As much as she hated to admit it, he was model material. No wonder he had such a sense of fashion.

Serena suddenly felt her head get fuzzy. She wasn't used to thinking about Darien's...attractiveness, and it was making her heart beat like crazy. She cleared her throat and stepped away from Andrew.

"I, uh, have to go," she muttered, walking quickly past Darien and avoiding his eyes. "I'll see you both later."

Andrew gave a start. "G-good luck with that contest!" he called, but Serena had already run down the sidewalk and was out of earshot. He frowned.

scouts on film

"Geez," he murmured, furrowing his eyebrows. "She sure got out of here in a hurry. Do you think something's wrong?"

Darien just stared at the floor.

That evening, Serena found her family about as supportive as Luna.

"What?" Serena's little brother Sammy laughed and dropped his forkful of peas. "You're kidding, right?"

Serena scowled. "No, Sammy. What's so funny?"

Sammy gave her a wicked smile. "How could you possibly be a model? You eat enough to feed an army, and you're clumsy enough to fall off any kind of catwalk. Besides, you eat so many sweets that your pretty white teeth are going to be shot in a few years."

Serena bared her pretty white teeth. "Want to find out how they are now?"

Mrs. Tsukino frowned worriedly. "I hope modeling won't take away from your schoolwork," she said, touching her chin. "I'm concerned about your grades. Ms. Haruna called today."

Serena winced. She'd forgotten about the last math test. "Uh, don't worry," she said, playing with a piece of bread. "I just had a bad test. I'll make it up."

Mr. Tsukino banged down his glass. "Well, I don't think you should model at all. I don't want my little girl wearing god-knows-what just so a bunch of stupid boys can drool all over her picture!"

"Dad, I'm not going to be modeling bikinis or anything."

"Good God!" Serena's father jumped up and pointed at her. "This Fisher boy is not going to put you in something so indecent!"

Serena sighed. "May I be excused?" she asked, standing and picking up her plate. "I need to do some thinking."

"Certainly, dear. And don't forget to do your homework."

"I hope your thinking leads you to giving up this ridiculous idea!" Serena's father sat back down and angrily grabbed his glass. "If some boy puts my daughter in something improper, he'll have to deal with me!"

scouts on film

Serena brought her plate to the kitchen and walked up the stairs to her room. She could tell her dad was upset. He's normally quite easy-going, but when it comes to Serena, he tends to get totally protective. She must have really struck a nerve.

Serena loped through her doorway and fell onto her bed. With a sigh, she hugged her fluffiest bunny doll and buried her face in a bunny pillow.

"Does modeling still seem like such a good idea?" Luna asked from her curled-up position on the desk.

"Go back to sleep," Serena said.



Chapter 7

Modeling Mayhem

As Serena walked home from school a few days later, she wasn't in the best of moods.

For starters, she still wasn't getting much support for the modeling contest. Amy and Raye had agreed with Luna and told her she didn't have time for a commitment as big as modeling. Ms. Haruna had found out Serena was entering and lectured her about priorities and how schoolwork had to come first. And Serena's dad just seemed to get angrier the more he thought about the contest, and she had the feeling he might forbid her from entering.

scouts on film

Serena sighed. "It feels like I never get any freedom," she muttered as she walked up her front steps.

She opened her mailbox and pulled out the mail. "I mean, what do I have to do to get everyone off my back? Become a more responsible student and Sailor Scout?"

Well, that sounded reasonable. Only thing was, Serena hated homework and found Sailor investigations really boring. She made a face as she shuffled through her mail. She hoped that one day she would love homework and Sailor investigations--then everyone might go a little easier on her.

She just wondered if that day would ever come.

She stopped sifting when she found a letter for her. It had Peter's return address. She quickly ripped open the envelope and pulled out the note.

As her eyes followed the neatly printed type, her face lit up. Oh my god! she thought. She actually made it to the second round of the modeling contest!

Serena cried out happily and dashed down the street. "This is so cool!" she exclaimed, flying

around a corner as she headed to the arcade. "Wait until I tell Andrew! I'll show everyone that I really can win this contest!"

"Blondie."

Serena slid to a halt. Squeezing her acceptance letter, she turned to the voice.

Darien was leaning in a nearby alleyway. His face was shadowed, but she could see that he was staring at the ground.

Serena felt her heart start to thud. She swallowed and tried to ignore it.

"Look," she said, holding up the letter and shaking it. She scoffed. "I got into the second round of Peter's contest. Didn't think I could do it, did you?"

Darien shrugged. "I never thought you couldn't do it."

Serena stopped. "Huh?"

Darien brushed a strand of hair from his eye. "I went to see that kid, Peter," he said quietly. "People told me he was always a little off, but there seems to be something seriously wrong with him. He was way too excited about this contest." He looked up, and his ocean eyes were cold. "Don't go

scouts on film

to the contest, Blondie."

For a long moment, Serena couldn't speak. Her jaw didn't want to close. "You...you investigated this?" she cried. She turned to him fully, clenching her free fist in anger. "Darien, what's wrong with you? Why can't you just stay out of my life? You're always looking for some excuse to--"

"I checked it out because I was worried about you."

Serena froze. "Wh-what?" she whispered.

Darien stepped away from the alley wall. "I told you I used to model, Serena. It's not as glitzy a business as you think it is. You should never go to some stranger just because he offered you a possible modeling job."

It took Serena a second to get her voice to work. "P-Peter's a classmate."

"But do you really know him that well?"

No. She didn't know him that well.

Darien walked up to her. She wanted to step back from him, but she couldn't move. "There's something seriously wrong with this kid," he said lowly, his eyes narrowing. "Trust me on this. Don't go to that competition."

Strange, frightening feelings bubbled up inside Serena. Her palms were sweating, and her vision blurred. She swallowed hard and blinked away the water that formed in her eyes.

Why did he make her feel like this?!

"Y-you don't understand anything," she said shakily. "I really want to do this, Darien. It's--"

"Listen to me!" He grabbed her by the arms and pulled her close. Serena's heart stopped.

"You are way smarter than you act, Blondie," Darien snapped. "Wake up! This competition could be dangerous, and I don't want you going!"

Serena's mouth opened, but no sound came out. He was so close. Too close. She could feel her heart speeding up again, she could feel her mind spinning. He...he didn't want her going.

Darien clenched his teeth. "It doesn't matter what you look like," he said darkly, his fingers tightening on her arms. "You're smart, and that's what's important. But if it'll keep you from entering if I say it, then fine, I'll say it."

He released her. "You don't have to enter," he said, his voice much quieter. He looked away. "You don't have to enter, Blondie, because I can tell

scouts on film

you right now that you're prettier than any other girl who could enter."

He turned around and left. Serena, her mouth open and her eyes blank, stared at him as he walked away. Her gaze didn't move, even as he went down a hill, even as the sound of his footsteps died away and he disappeared from view.

And Serena didn't notice that she had released the letter to flutter its way down to the sidewalk.

The second round of Peter Fisher's super-model competition was to take place in the ritzy hotel MAISON FRANÇAISE. He had rented out the entire pool area of the hotel for the immense contest.

Serena, outside the hotel, checked her application form. She shoved the paper in her pocket and nodded. "This is the place."

Luna jumped from Serena's shoulder. "I must say, I'm quite proud of you," the cat said as she climbed into Serena's duffel bag. "For you to come to this place and investigate instead of compete is commendable. Does this mean you're taking

your job as a Sailor Scout seriously?"

"I always take it seriously," Serena mumbled, picking up the bag and making sure it was unzipped. "I just don't like investigating if I don't have to."

"Who told you Peter was acting suspiciously?"

Serena swallowed. Pushing open the large glass door she said, "A reliable source."

The hotel was huge. Chandeliers hung from the ceiling, fancy lights lined the walls, and bell-boys ran around the red-carpeted lobby to help guests. Serena whistled.

"Peter must be loaded if he can afford to rent out space in this place," she said under her breath.

"Serena, look."

Serena followed Luna's gaze, and saw a sign hanging on a wall. PETER FISHER'S COMPETITORS, it said. PLEASE PROCEED TO THE POOL AREA.

"OK," Serena said, pushing the strap of her bag higher up on her shoulder. "That's us." She followed the arrow on the sign, pushed open a large door and stepped into the pool room.

scouts on film

There were hundreds of girls. Serena could hardly believe it. Not only did she recognize many of her classmates but also younger girls from other grades and even girls from Crossroads High School had come. Everyone was looking to the front of the room, where Peter stood on a stool and made a speech.

"Geez," Serena muttered. "Wasn't very selective with the second round, was he?"

"Pay attention to Peter."

"Right, Luna."

Peter was decked out in a fancy tuxedo, but his bushy hair was as bushy as ever. There was something a little crazy in his smile, and his eyes seemed darker than usual.

"I'm so happy all of you energetic girls could make it!" he called, rubbing his hands together. "You can all go to the bathrooms to change into your outfits. I'll call you out here in groups of five for your photo shoots. And remember--I want to see lots of energy!"

The girls all started chattering. As one group moved towards the bathrooms, Peter giggled wickedly and hugged his camera to his chest.

Serena narrowed her eyes. Darien was right, she thought. Peter looked totally weird. He wasn't himself at all.

Serena ducked into a towel closet and closed the door. "Luna," she asked as she pulled her Sailor Scout communicator out of her pocket. "How do I use this thing?"

Luna jumped out of the bag. "Push the blue button to contact Amy and the red button to contact Raye. Hold down the button while you talk."

Serena dropped her duffel bag on the floor and pressed the communicator's blue button. The little pink calculator buzzed a few times, then Amy's tiny face appeared on the number screen.

"Serena?" Amy asked. "Is that you?"

Serena held down the blue button. "Yeah, Amy. I'm at MAISON FRANCAISE downtown. Could you grab Raye and get down here ASAP? I think I'm going to need back-up."

"What's wrong?" Amy's voice went very serious. "Are you in danger?"

Serena shook her head. "No," she answered. "But I'm afraid two hundred girls from Crossroads are."

scouts on film

Since Serena and Luna weren't yet positive if the Negaverse had gotten to Peter, they went to the bathrooms to wait the contest out. The girls inside were busy putting on their finest outfits and applying their best make-up. They gabbed excitedly about the contest.

"I hear Peter's going to use his supermodel in every one of the photos in the new collection," one girl said as she spread lipstick on her lips. "If his new collection wins like his last one, the girl will be super famous!"

"That would be so cool," her friend said with a sigh. "I hope I win!"

Serena crossed her arms and leaned against a stall door. Although she had seen many classmates, it didn't look as if any of her close friends had come.

"The crowd's thinning out," Serena murmured to her bag. "The girls who are called out don't come back. Do you think Peter's dismissing them after the photos?"

"I don't know," Luna whispered back. "It doesn't seem likely. All the girls are leaving their street clothes in here."

POOL ROOM

Fifteen minutes later, only five girls were left. When Peter called them out for their turn, Serena and Luna secretly snuck out after them.

Peter brought the girls poolside and told them how to stand. After making sure they held good poses, he backed up and set up his camera.

Serena and Luna watched from behind some potted palm trees. "What's that pile?" Luna whispered, gesturing to a large pile that sat by Peter's feet. "It looks like slips of paper."

Serena squinted so she could see better. "It's photos," she answered. "Those must be the photos he took of the other girls." Serena looked around, then frowned. "But where are the other girls?"

Peter brought his camera to his face and started giggling wickedly. "OK, girls," he called. "Give me lots of energy!"

Serena held her breath. The girls all smiled, and Peter clicked the shutter.

A huge flash of light burst through the pool room and blinded Serena. She cried out and fell back, covering her eyes.

What? she thought. What was going on?!

The light finally faded, and Peter laughed

scouts on film

maniacally. Serena scrambled back to her squatting position and blinked her eyes to clear them. She gasped.

The girls were gone!

Peter tossed his new photo onto the pile. "Welcome to my museum, girls," he said with an evil smile. "Here you will stay locked away in my photos and remain in my collection forever!"



Chapter 8

Don't Smile for the Camera

Serena covered her mouth. Peter was trapping the girls in photographs! Two hundred living, breathing teenagers had been reduced to a pile of pictures! This had to be the worst Negaverse scheme yet.

As Peter laughed and hugged his camera, Nephrite's evil symbol on the lens glowed. The symbol began sucking a white light from the pile of photographs.

Serena scrambled from behind the palm trees and dove behind a wall. Luna scurried after her.

"Transform!" the cat ordered. "That camera's

scouts on film

draining the energy from those trapped girls!"

Serena threw her hand into the air. She hoped Amy and Raye would show soon. This looked like too much to handle alone!

"Show time," she said breathlessly. "MOON PRISM POWER MAKE-UP!"

Rainbow lights enveloped her and burned away her clothes. Serena closed her eyes as her Sailor Moon uniform slid onto her body. Once her transformation had ended and the lights had died away, she ran out from behind the wall.

"Peter!" she shouted. "Peter, drop that camera!"

Peter looked up. He scowled, his fingers curling over his camera. "Who are you?" he snapped. "And why didn't you follow directions?"

Serena didn't like this at all. Peter had totally lost it. His normally soft brown eyes had turned completely black.

"I'm not one of your girls," Serena called, putting one hand on her hip and pointing at him in a traditional super-hero pose. "I am Sailor Moon, Champion of Justice and defender of the innocent, and in the name of the Moon, you're punished!"

Peter snarled. He brought his camera to his

face. "Smile," he barked.

Serena dove just as Peter clicked the button. A white laser beam shot out of the camera and hit the palm tree Serena had been standing in front of. The tree vanished. Peter ripped the photo of the palm tree from his camera and aimed again.

"Don't get shot!" Luna shouted. "He'll have you trapped in one of those photos!"

"Thanks, Luna," Serena muttered as she dodged once more. This time, when Peter accidentally shot a lounge chair, Serena ran at him. Mimicking the Sailor V video game, she jumped into the air and kicked Peter with all her might.

Her boot crashed into his cheek with a loud cracking noise. Peter crumpled to the floor, his camera clattering to the tiles.

Serena's eyes widened. She didn't think her first drop kick would work that well.

"Peter?" she asked, going to her knees beside him. His eyes were closed, and she could see a large bruise in the shape of her boot forming on his cheek. She winced.

"Oh, man," she murmured. "I really nailed him."

"You didn't mean to," Luna said, motioning

scouts on film

to the camera. "Now, see if you can work that thing."

Serena carefully picked up the camera and examined it. There had been a symbol somewhere on it, right? She finally found the symbol on the lens. Looking at it, her eyes widened.

The symbol was flickering red.

Nephrite held his palms out toward the picture of Peter on his star chart. The general's eyes were narrowed and cold.

"Someone's tampering with the camera," he said through gritted teeth. "The boy's energy is close enough to its peak. Modelite, drain Peter's energy and destroy whoever's ruining my plans!"

The camera suddenly went white-hot. Serena cried out and dropped it just as a black bolt of energy shot out of Nephrite's symbol and began to take shape.

Serena stepped back and clenched her teeth. Just great! she thought as she watched the energy twist in the air. She should've smashed the stupid camera! Looks like the fight was only beginning.

The black energy mutated into a ten-foot-

tall white-skinned woman with evil black eyes and cruel red lips. The demon brushed her glittering black hair over her shoulder and smirked.

"You call that little sailor suit fashion?" Modelite mocked. "You'll never be a supermodel with clothes like that."

Serena snorted. "And I suppose a bloated banshee like you is model material?"

Modelite snarled. She opened one hand to reveal a human eye in her palm. "You'll pay for that," she snapped as she pointed the eye at Peter. The eye shot a white laser at the boy, and he vanished.

Serena sucked in a breath as Modelite held up a photo. It was a picture of the unconscious Peter.

"Do you see my power?" Modelite asked as she tossed the picture on the pile. "You'd better watch your mouth, brat, or I'll stick a photo of you in the incinerator!"

Serena spread her feet. "Let those people out of those photos!" she shouted, reaching for her tiara. "Let them out or I'll blast you back to the Negaverse, freak!"

Modelite aimed her hand and shot at

scouts on film

Serena. The Champion of Justice dove out of the laser's path, but Modelite, faster than Peter had been, didn't have to stop to reload. The demon shot at Serena again, the super-hero barely managing to get out of the way.

Serena stumbled to her feet, quickly dodging yet another laser. Shoot! she thought. That evil chick is fast!

"Sailor Moon, watch out!"

Serena heard Luna's warning too late. The girl turned, only to see a laser coming straight for her. She screamed and covered her head.

Luna jumped in front of the Champion of Justice and took the laser. The cat's red-orange eyes met Serena's for a brief instant, then Luna vanished in a flash of white light.

Modelite pulled out the photo and frowned. "Stupid cat," she muttered. "You blocked my shot."

Serena couldn't move. She stared, mouth open, while the demon threw Luna's picture onto the pile.

Luna? Serena's mind whispered. She was...she was...No! No! Luna couldn't be gone!

"LUNA!" Serena screamed, clenching her fists over her mouth. Her eyes were filled with hor-

ror. "Luna, NO!"

Modelite raised an eyebrow. "I'm sorry," she murmured, raising her hand. "Was that your kitty I just zapped?"

"You witch!" Serena shrieked, ripping her tiara off her forehead. It turned to a glowing disk in her shaking hand, and she went into a throwing position. "You evil witch! Give me back my guardian!"

Modelite bared her teeth. "Not a chance," she said as she set to shoot another laser.

"MERCURY BUBBLES BLAST!"

Somebody barreled into Serena knocking her out of the way as fog filled the room. The laser hit a small table and vaporized it.

"What?" Modelite called. "Who did that?"

Serena, sprawled on the floor, looked up with watery eyes. Sailor Mars stood beside her, her scarlet star earrings glittering in the fog.

"You're getting heavy, Sailor Moon," the Scout said as she pulled out an anti-evil parchment. "You're going to have to start dodging those blasts on your own from now on."

It was Raye! Serena jumped to her feet and grabbed the priestess by the shoulders.

scouts on film

"Mars!" she cried desperately, shaking her friend. "That lady zapped Luna! She's trapped her and two hundred girls and Peter, and I don't know how to get them out!"

Raye's dark eyes flickered purple. She put her gloved hands over Serena's.

"Stay low," she ordered, stepping away from the Champion of Justice. "Mercury's causing a distraction right now. I'm going to move in and try to disable the demon."

There was the flash of a laser, and Amy's voice cried out. Raye pushed Serena back and ran into the fog.

"Don't come out!" Raye called behind her. "Protect yourself, Sailor Moon!"

Serena fell to her knees, her body shaking. Amy and Raye would succeed. They had to. But Serena had never lost Luna before, and she was scared. The demon was too strong!

The fog suddenly thinned, and Serena sucked in a breath. The last wisps of mist dissipated to reveal Modelite standing alone. She laughed and held up two photographs.

"Were these two brats your friends?" she asked, throwing the pictures of Sailor Mars and

Sailor Mercury onto the photo pile. "They weren't nearly fast enough. You losers are pathetic!"

Serena choked and felt tears come to her eyes. That creature had Amy and Raye! Now Serena was alone. What chance did she have if everyone else had been captured?

Modelite took a step toward Serena as Serena tried to scramble backwards. The girl didn't take her eyes off the demon, but she was trembling like a leaf.

"Somebody help," Serena whispered, her voice high.

"Don't worry, little girl," Modelite said with a wicked grin. "I'll send you to join your friends. Only thing is, none of you will ever be able to leave!"

Serena's back hit a cool, smooth surface. She whipped around, only to see she had hit the huge mirror that served as a wall in the pool room. She was trapped!

Modelite raised her palm. "You're mine," she said with evil glee. "When I turn you sorry brats over to the Negaverse, I'll finally be promoted. Then I'll be the top model of the demon world!"

Serena desperately ran her hands over the

scouts on film

mirror, hoping to find some shard of glass to use as a weapon. She had dropped her tiara when Raye had knocked her over, so she was unarmed.

No good, her mind spun. She had no weapon, no guardian cat, and no teammates. The only resource she had left was herself, and she didn't possess the bravery of Raye or the intelligence of Amy. It was just her and one useless giant mirror!

Serena froze. Mirror?

"Good-bye," the demon called. She grinned and shot her laser.

Serena held her breath. Praying that her plan would work, she fell flat on the floor and covered her head.

The laser beam hit the mirror and bounced back at Modelite. The demon's eyes widened, but she didn't have time to dodge. She screamed as the laser hit her and filled her with white light.

"No!" she shrieked as the light rushed through her body. "You can't do this to--"

She was cut off as the light exploded. Serena gasped and covered her eyes against the glare. When it finally dimmed, the Champion of Justice peeked out from behind her arm.

A photograph fluttered to the ground.

Serena stared at the photo, eyes wide. Was the monster gone? Shakily getting to her feet, the girl walked over to the picture and picked it up.

It was a photograph of where Modelite had been standing. But where the demon had stood, there was nothing.

Serena covered her mouth. So that's why being shot had destroyed Modelite. Vampires have no reflection in mirrors. I guess demons can't appear in photos.

The huge pile of photographs suddenly glowed white. After a bright flash, the pool room's floor was filled with two hundred moaning girls, one groggy photographer, one breathless cat, and two dazed Sailor Scouts.

Serena's eyes welled up with tears. Everyone was OK! They were really OK! Hugging herself, she smiled so widely she was afraid she would crack her face. She had saved them all by herself.

Amy looked over at Serena and gasped. "Sailor Moon!" she cried, getting to her feet. "Are you OK?"

As Amy, Raye, and Luna ran over to Serena,

scouts on film

Peter clutched his head and looked up. His eyes fell on Sailor Moon, and he sucked in a breath.

"Oh my god," he whispered, blinking unbelievably. "Who's...she?"

That evening, Serena sat with her family to watch Peter's interview on the local news. Since the girls in Peter's modeling competition thought the Negaverse attack had been a dream, they were surprised that he had sent them home without having them compete.

"Peter!" a reporter called. "Why did you cancel your modeling contest? Is it true your next photography collection will still feature a local girl of your choice?"

Peter shook his head. "I've changed my mind," he replied. "I don't want a supermodel anymore. I've been inspired to do a whole new series of photos."

The reporters all began to murmur. "What was your inspiration," one asked, "and what will the theme of this new series be?"

Peter smiled. "I saw a beautiful girl in a dream earlier today," he explained. "Somebody said she was from the moon. Therefore, I've decid-

HALO MOON

ed my next theme will be moonscapes."

The reporters all shouted questions at once. Serena blushed and buried herself deeper in the couch.

She had been beautiful enough to inspire the creative genius Peter Fisher. If that wasn't a compliment, she didn't know what was.

Her father snorted. "I do believe that boy's crossed the line between genius and insanity," he muttered. "Dreaming about a girl from the moon? He must be eating weird things before he sleeps to get a dream of something so far-fetched."

Serena smiled. "Not that far-fetched," she murmured to herself.



Chapter 9

Sammy's (Non)Girlfriend

Queen Beryl's throne-room in the Negaverse was a hot and frightening place. The crumbling stone pillars were encrusted with tiny green worms, and wind howled through, sounding like a tortured soul. Nephrite, too preoccupied to care about his surroundings, knelt in front of the throne.

"You summoned me, my queen?"

Queen Beryl narrowed her orange eyes. Her fiery red hair hung past her shoulders in thick, ragged waves, and sharp fangs glittered against her blood-red lips.

"You have failed me many times, Nephrite,"

she snapped. "I disposed of Jedite when he failed me as you have. What do you have to say in your defense?"

"Only that I wouldn't fail if those Sailor brats would stop interfering, Queen Beryl."

A melodic laugh came from the back of the throne room. A female general with a tea-colored ponytail and glittering green eyes appeared in a flurry of cherry blossom petals.

Zoycite bowed to Queen Beryl. "My queen," she said, a smile curving her lips. "If I may interject, I do believe Nephrite is whipped. It seems three teeny little girls are too much for him."

Nephrite glared daggers at his rival general. "Nobody invited you!" he said with a hiss.

"Quiet," Beryl ordered. "She's right." The queen let one long-nailed hand travel down her crystal ball. "Those girls are young and inexperienced. A man with your training should be able to wipe them out without difficulty."

Nephrite lowered his head. "Forgive me, my queen."

Zoycite hummed. "Queen Beryl," she asked, "would you like me to help this poor fool?"

scouts on film

"No." Nephrite stood. "My queen, I don't need help from one such as she."

Zoycite snarled. "Watch it, you--"

"Silence!"

Zoycite pressed her lips together and obeyed the royal command.

The red-haired queen bared her teeth. "Stop acting like children, generals. I am not beyond riding myself of arguing servants!"

Nephrite bowed his head. "The stars have told me of my next victim," he said in an even voice. "There is a young girl, a dollmaker, at Crossroads who is near her energetic peak. I will begin my hunt shortly."

"And the Sailors?"

"I will vanquish them when the time is right."

"That time had better come soon," Beryl snapped. She waved a hand. "You are dismissed, Nephrite. Gather the child's energy immediately."

Nephrite nodded, then left the throne-room without looking back. Zoycite glared at him as he went.

Her green eyes blazed in the darkness.

HALF MOON

"Gooooood morning!"

Serena dropped her backpack by a chair at the breakfast table and happily sat down. Her father, reading his newspaper, stared at her in disbelief.

"Serena," he exclaimed, checking his watch. "You're not late!"

Serena giggled and picked up a piece of toast. "I only hit the snooze button three times today," she replied. "I decided I wanted to eat breakfast sitting down for once."

Mrs. Tsukino smiled and set a plate of pancakes in front of her daughter. "That's wonderful, dear. We miss you in the morning."

Serena cheerfully shoveled pancakes into her mouth. She missed her family in the morning, too. And she missed the food.

Sammy walked into the kitchen and dropped his backpack on the floor. He noticed Serena, and he raised an eyebrow.

"Mom?" he asked. "Who's this person, and what's she done with Serena?"

Serena scowled. "Watch it," she mumbled through a mouthful of pancakes.

scouts on film

Sammy sat down and took his glass of juice. "I thought I saw pigs flying this morning."

Serena glared, but couldn't snap at him through her full mouth. That boy had some nerve. She wished she could tell him she was a superhero--maybe that would frighten him into treating her nicely.

Yeah, right. If Sammy ever treated her nicely, pigs really would fly.

"Sammy," Mr. Tsukino said as he flipped the page of his newspaper, "your friend Mika's been in the paper a lot recently."

Sammy looked up in surprise. "Really?"

Mrs. Tsukino gave Sammy his pancakes and smiled. "Mika's mother is known throughout Crossroads for her dollmaking, and it seems Mika is quite talented, too. Mika made a doll that won the annual Crossroads Young Dollmakers' Competition last week."

Sammy stared at his shoes. "Wow," he said quietly, his toes pointing toward the floor. "I didn't know she was that good."

Serena's lips curved upwards in a wicked grin. Sammy had been a close friend to Mika

Cassidy for over a year, but Serena had the feeling they were more than just that.

Serena swallowed and chuckled. "Cool, Sammy," she cooed. "Must be nice having such a famous girlfriend."

Sammy turned red and glared daggers. "She is not my girlfriend!" he snapped. "Don't even start with me, Serena, or I'll tell Melvin you're as much in love with him as he's in love with you!"

Serena jumped up from her chair. "You do that and I'll tell Mika you call her name out at night!"

Sammy leaped up to scream back at her, but Mr. Tsukino held up a hand.

"Stop it, both of you," he ordered. "Neither of you are allowed to fall in love until you're out of college, anyway, so stop arguing."

Serena made a face. That was such a fatherly thing for him to say.

Mrs. Tsukino looked at the kitchen clock. "Serena dear," she said, pointing. "Doesn't school start in five minutes?"

Serena turned to the clock then clapped her hands over her mouth in horror. "Oh my god!" she

scouts on film

shrieked, shoving back her chair and grabbing her backpack. "I'm going to be late!" She jammed a piece of toast into her mouth and ran out the door. "Bye, Mom and Dad!"

Mrs. Tsukino smiled cheerfully and waved. "Good-bye, dear," she called. "I'll have cookies for you when you get home from detention."

Sammy was a little early to school that morning, as usual. He put his notebook and pencil box on his desk and stretched out his arms.

"Geez," he muttered, yawning. "I'd sleep better at night if Serena wouldn't snore so much."

"Doesn't your sister sleep down the hall?"

Sammy's eyes widened. He turned around, and his cheeks turned pink.

"Mika!" he exclaimed, averting his eyes. He gave a dry chuckle and scratched the back of his head. "Uh, she does sleep down the hall, but her snores are so loud that walls aren't much help."

Mika Cassidy giggled and covered her mouth. She was a short and pretty girl, with shoulder-length brown hair, green eyes, and a cute button nose.

"You're so funny," she said, her eyes twinkling. She pulled a package out from behind her back. "Here," she said, holding it out. "This is for you."

Sammy stared at the brightly wrapped gift in disbelief. "What?" he asked breathlessly. "A gift? Why?"

Mika smiled. "It's the doll I made that won the Crossroads Young Dollmakers' Competition. Please have it."

Sammy's jaw dropped. "No way!" he cried, shaking his hands and taking a step back. "Mika, I can't take that! You're so talented to have won that contest, there's no way I could accept that doll!"

Mika blushed. "Sammy," she murmured shyly, "it's when you say things like that that I'm sure I want to give it to you. You're the best friend I've ever had." She moved closer to him, her head lowered. "And I...care about you."

Sammy turned bright red.

"Woo!" one student sang out from the back of the room. "Would you check out the lovebirds? Sammy and Mika are finally getting together!"

A group of children suddenly swarmed

scouts on film

around the two, cheering and calling as if it were a romance movie.

"Go, Sammy!"

"C'mon, you two, we know you've been in love forever, just admit it!"

"Are you guys going to get married now that you've shown your feelings for each other?"

Sammy clenched his teeth and moved back. "We are not in love!" he shouted, shoving Mika's present back at her. "Mika, take your gift back!"

Mika gasped and lost her hold on the package. It slipped from her fingers and hit the floor with a sickening crunching noise.

Sammy gasped. Mika, her eyes wide with terror, fell to her knees beside the now-mangled gift. She ran shaky hands over it, but her fingers only confirmed the cracked porcelain under the wrapping paper.

"My doll!" she cried, her eyes filling up with tears. "M-my doll!" She clenched her fists over her mouth and squeezed her eyes shut.

"Oh, Sammy!" she wailed. "How could you?"

Serena walked home sulking after detention

SAILOR MOON

that day. It amazed her that even though she had tried so hard to get up early, she had still managed to be late for school. She must be cursed. Could the Negaverse have placed some lateness curse on her so she wouldn't arrive at battles fast enough?

Serena made a face. No way. She had been late to school for years before becoming Sailor Moon. Oh, well.

"Serena Tsukino!"

Serena turned. A young girl from Sammy's class ran up the sidewalk, her blue eyes wide.

"Serena!" the girl cried, stopping in front of the blonde and panting. "You're Serena, Sammy's sister, right?"

Serena's eyebrows raised. "You're Sammy's friend, aren't you?"

The little girl heaved for a few minutes to catch her breath, then shook her head. "I was, but I don't think I want to be his friend anymore!" The girl clenched her tiny fists. "Serena, you won't believe what Sammy did!"



Chapter 10

Tall Order

Mika, alone in her dark bedroom, sobbed against her pillow. She had hardly spoken to her mother since getting home from school, and had even skipped her afternoon snack. She had locked away Sammy's broken doll in her desk drawer, where she wouldn't have to look at it.

A faint knocking came at the bedroom door. "Mika, honey?"

Mika bit her lip. "Please, Mom," she called. "I don't want to talk right now."

"Please, Mika dear, I know something's wrong, but we can talk about it, OK? And you have a visitor."

HALLOWEEN

Mika rubbed the tears from her cheeks. Setting aside the new doll she had begun making after getting home from school, she got off her bed and opened her door.

Mika's mother was a thin woman, with short brown hair and the same button nose as her daughter. When she saw Mika's tear-streaked cheeks, she knelt and gave Mika a hug.

"My poor baby," Mrs. Cassidy murmured sadly. "Why don't you want to tell me what happened?"

Mika hiccupped, but she swallowed her sob. "I'll tell you later," she mumbled. "Promise."

Mrs. Cassidy held her daughter at arm's length. She frowned. "Do you think you're up to seeing our guest?" she asked. "I can ask him to come later if you want."

Mika shook her head and sniffed. "I'm OK."

Mrs. Cassidy sighed. "All right," she said, standing up. Taking her daughter's hand, she led the sniffing little girl into the living room.

Nephrite stood from the couch and smiled slightly.

Mrs. Cassidy gestured to the tall general.

scouts on film

"Mika, this is Maxfield Stanton," she explained. "He's a local doll enthusiast." She nodded to him. "Please sit down, Mr. Stanton."

Nephrite nodded back and retook his seat. Mika sat next to her mother on the opposite couch and folded her hands politely.

"So you're the famous Mika." Nephrite's white teeth flashed in his smile. "I must say, I was thrilled to hear of your win at the Crossroads Young Dollmakers' Competition. Dollmaking is such a wonderful art, and to see such young talent is very refreshing."

Mika lowered her eyes. "Mmm," she answered quietly.

Mrs. Cassidy sighed. "I'm sorry," she told Nephrite. "It seems that Mika had a small problem at school today that she doesn't want to talk about. She's usually much more cheerful."

"I can imagine." Nephrite crossed his legs. "I come with a business proposition, Mika. I saw a picture of your prize-winning doll in the paper, and I would love it if you would make twenty copies of it for me. I could sell them without a problem, and you would get 100% of the profits."

Mrs. Cassidy's eyes widened. "But surely, you deserve a commission--"

"I do it for the love of the art, Mrs. Cassidy." Nephrite focused his dark blue eyes on Mika. "So what do you say?"

Mika swallowed hard. "Um..."

"May I at least see your doll, Mika? If you're not sure about making copies, just glimpsing this extraordinary piece of work would be thrilling."

Tears formed in her eyes, but Mika quickly blinked them away. "I left it at school," she mumbled. "I can't show it to you now."

Nephrite leaned back on the couch. "I see."

Mrs. Cassidy frowned. "Mika, why did you leave such a valuable doll at school?"

Mika sniffed. "I-I just forgot, Mom."

Mrs. Cassidy sighed. "Well, that's all right. Do you have any other dolls to show Mr. Stanton?"

Mika rubbed her eye with a fist. "I started a new doll this afternoon. I can bring that."

Nephrite smiled. "That would be wonderful."

Mika stood from the couch and went to her room. A few moments later, she returned and

scouts on film

handed a half-finished doll to Nephrite. The doll was pretty, with curly black hair and bright black eyes, but the expression on its face was terribly sad.

"She seems very upset." Nephrite looked up. "You must have had a rough day at school to make a doll with such an expression. Are you all right?"

Mika averted her eyes and nodded.

Nephrite formed dark energy in his palm and quickly sealed a symbol into the doll's forehead. He gently set the doll on the coffee table.

"She's beautiful." He leaned back on the couch and shook his head. "You're absolutely amazing. When you finish her, could you make me fifteen copies to sell?"

Mika's eyes widened. "You really think she's that good?" she whispered.

"She's remarkable, dear child."

Mrs. Cassidy smiled excitedly. "I'm sure Mika would love to make copies of the doll for you. Right, Mika?"

Mika smiled shyly, her cheeks turning pink. "Y-yes, if you really think it has potential."

"Fantastic. You've simply made my week." Nephrite stood. "I must be going. Would you mind

if I came to the doll exhibition you two are having next Saturday? I'd like to see more of Mika's work." He nodded at Mrs. Cassidy. "And I'd like to see more of your amazing work, too, Mrs. Cassidy. Your daughter takes after you in her talent, after all."

Mrs. Cassidy blushed. "We would be honored if you came," she said, standing. "Thank you very much, Mr. Stanton. I'll see you off."

"Thank you, Mrs. Cassidy."

As Mika's mother showed Nephrite to the door, Mika took a long look at her newest doll. She picked it up to examine it.

Something flashed in her eyes as soon as she touched the porcelain toy. Mika's face lit up, and she grinned strangely.

"Wow," she whispered. "I feel like I could make a hundred of these dolls. I'm so energetic!"

After Nephrite said good-bye to Mrs. Cassidy, he walked out to his Ferrari. He slipped on his shades and slid his long hands into his pockets.

"Excellent," he murmured under his breath. Sammy sat at the desk in his room and

scouts on film

crumpled up his letter. He threw it over his shoulder with a snarl.

"Why can't I word it right?!" he snapped in frustration, pulling out a fresh piece of paper. He uncapped his Gundam pen and started to scribble.

"Dear Mika," he read as he wrote. "I'm really sorry I broke your doll. I didn't mean to. I was just mad because I didn't want everyone to think we wanted to get married. Although, if you really do want to get married when we grow up--' What? No way! I can't write that! What's wrong with me? Agh!"

He crumpled up the paper and tossed it. Pulling out a new sheet, he started again.

"Dear only my good friend and nothing more Mika..."

The door to his room was suddenly thrown open. Sammy's head snapped up, his pen freezing on the paper.

One furious Serena stood in the doorway.

"SAMUEL ALEXANDER TSUKINO!" The blonde stomped into the room, grabbed Sammy by the ear, and jerked him to his feet. The boy shrieked.

"Let me go!" he shouted. "That hurts, wind-bag!"

"You'll know what pain really is when I'm through with you!" She threw him back into the chair and jammed her hands on her hips. "Sammy!" she yelled. "How on earth could you hurt poor Mika's feelings like you did?!"

Sammy rubbed his ear ruefully. "I didn't mean to," he muttered, turning back to his letter. "People were just saying we were love birds, and I got mad."

"Abby Holland from your class said you didn't even apologize for it, and that you ignored Mika for the rest of the day."

Sammy glared. "I had to. If I'd apologized, everyone would've thought we really were in lo--OW!" He cried out as Serena hefted him by his ear again. "Serena!"

Serena growled menacingly. Her own brother, being so cruel! He brought a bad name to the Tsukino family. And Serena really liked Mika. She was furious that Sammy had treated the little girl so poorly.

"You are going to march down to Mika's

scouts on film

house right now and beg for forgiveness, you little villain!" Serena threw her brother towards the door. "Now get moving, or I'll tell Mom and Dad what you did!"

Sammy scowled at her and clutched his ear. "Fine!" he snapped, grabbing his coat. "But I don't need some meatball-headed drill sergeant telling me what to--hey!" Sammy stumbled as Serena shoved him out the door.

"Get on your knees when you apologize," she ordered. "You'll be lucky if you she forgives you for this. And if I ever hear of you treating her like this again, you're really going to regret it!" She made a shooing movement with her hand. "Now go. And give Mika a kiss on the cheek so she knows you really care."

Sammy's eyes filled with horror. "What?" he cried. Serena slammed the door in his face.

The blonde immediately leaned against the wall and covered her mouth. She hoped Sammy wouldn't hear her giggles.

OK, so she hadn't really meant that thing about kissing Mika. But she had just wanted to see the expression on his face.

"Sammy and Mika," she said with a muffled laugh. "Oh, God, they are so in love!"

The sun was setting by the time Sammy arrived at the Cassidy residence. He walked up the steps and nervously ran a hand through his light brown hair.

"Geez," he muttered. "Kiss her? As if! That Serena can be so totally dumb." He pressed his thumb against the doorbell and waited. He shivered in the evening air, and pulled his windbreaker closer to him.

"I mean, even though I do dream about it, it's not like I could really--" He cut himself off and turned bright red. "Geez!" he cried, hitting himself in the head. "I can't think about this right now! What's wrong with me? Focus, Sammy!"

The door opened, and Sammy quickly straightened. A very worried Mrs. Cassidy stepped out of the house.

"Sammy?" she asked, covering her mouth. "Oh, thank goodness you're here!"

Sammy blinked in surprise. Mrs. Cassidy's eyes were puffy, as if she had been crying, and her

scouts on film

face was streaked with worry lines.

Sammy's eyes filled with concern. "Mrs. Cassidy?" he asked. "What's wrong?"

Mrs. Cassidy led Sammy into the house and took his jacket. "Please, talk to Mika!" she begged. "Maxfield Stanton stopped by earlier today and asked if she would make dolls for him, and she locked herself in her room and hasn't stopped working at all! When I try to talk to her, she snaps at me and won't unlock her door. It's not like my dear Mika at all!" She bit her lip as tears filled her eyes. "I-I don't know what to do!"

Sammy swallowed. "I hope she's not like this because of how I acted," he murmured under his breath.

"Could you talk to Mika?" Mrs. Cassidy asked desperately. "You two are such close friends, maybe she'll listen to you."

Sammy nodded. "Of course I'll talk to her, Mrs. Cassidy."

Inside her dark room, Mika painted on the sad face of her ninth doll copy. She grinned crazily.

"I can make them all tonight," she said, lick-

ing her lips. "The convention is in a few days, and I'll be able to make at least twenty different dolls for it. It'll be great!"

A light tapping at her door made her stop. She whipped her head around and snarled. "Not you again," she snapped.

She heard her mother make a muffled sobbing noise. But the voice that came through was not Mrs. Cassidy's.

"Mika?" Sammy called. "Are you all right?"

Mika scowled. "I'm fine," she answered, turning back to her doll. "Better than ever. Leave me alone."

"Mika, please open the door. Your mother's worried about you, and I--"

"I'm not upset over you anymore," Mika said angrily. "Go away, Sammy. I want to be alone!"

Sammy kept pleading with her, but Mika ignored him. She gleefully put the finishing touches on her doll's face, then gathered her materials to start a new copy.

"I have so much energy," she exclaimed. "So much energy!"

On the original doll, Nephrite's symbol flick-

scouts on film

ered red. Mika didn't notice as the doll turned its head to her and smiled evilly.



Chapter 11

Doll Dangers

Serena was in her room reading comics when she heard Sammy return home. The blonde ran to the staircase and looked down. Her little brother hung his coat up on its hook, his eyes downcast.

Serena scowled. "You're back awfully fast, boy. You couldn't have gotten on your knees and begged in such a short time."

Sammy glared coldly up at her. "She wouldn't talk to me," he said flatly. "She probably doesn't want to be my friend anymore, either. Happy?" He shoved his hands in his pockets and stared at the door. "I don't exactly need you butting into my

scouts on film

affairs, Serena."

Serena raised her eyebrows in surprise. Sammy truly seemed concerned, and that was odd. Could it be her bratty little brother actually had a heart? And this heart was hurting because Mika was upset with him?

"My, my," Serena said, sitting down on the top step. She rested her cheek in her palm. "It's tough dealing with a boy who's in love and has just been rejected. I don't really know what to say."

Sammy whirled around at her, teeth bared. "I am not in love!" he shouted.

Serena rolled her eyes. "Right. And I can't stand cupcakes."

Sammy snorted and turned away.

"Look, Sammy. I'm your big sister. You can tell me who you have a crush on." Serena batted her eyelashes and grinned. "I'm sure I can help you with your girl problems. I know just what girls want."

"I'll bet," he muttered. "Seeing as how you tell everyone what you want every day."

Serena growled. "I'm trying to make shopping for my birthday gift easier, brat." She crossed

her arms. "And I wouldn't scoff at my advice if I were you. You seem to be in some pretty hot water with Mika right now, and I could be your ticket back to friendship land."

Sammy sighed. After a long moment, he kicked the floor with his shoe. "I doubt you could help."

"Try me."

Sammy turned to her and narrowed his eyes. "Fine," he snapped. "Tell me how to tell a girl I'm sorry for what I did and that I really do care about her."

Serena had to choke back a giggle. She hated to admit it, but Sammy was really adorable. His crush was more obvious than Serena's crush on Boston cream pie.

"If there's one thing girls love," Serena said, raising a finger, "it's gifts. Make her something. A card, a friendship bracelet, I don't know--something. Something pretty and homemade, so she knows you were thinking about her and that you made it yourself. And apologize to her profusely, looking into her eyes when you do so. Don't slouch, or she won't think you're sincere." She

scouts on film

grinned wickedly. "And kiss her afterwards."

Sammy's cheeks blazed. "Serena!"

Serena laughed. "Kidding. But do the other stuff and you'll be fine, OK? Trust me."

Sammy looked to the floor. He let out a breath and ran a hand through his hair. "She and I like Sailor Moon," he murmured. "Maybe I'll make her a Sailor Moon doll."

Serena grinned. Cool! Even though she usually left a fight just as victims were waking up, it looked like she still had a following, and in her own brother, too. Talk about ironic.

Not that she was complaining. Any fans were good fans.

"Sounds great, Sammy." Serena gave a "V is for Victory" sign with her fingers. "Good luck."

Sammy barely nodded. Taking his hands from his pockets, he walked out of the house's entryway and disappeared into the kitchen.

Serena smiled. It was still a little hard to believe that her baby brother was so totally in love.

She giggled. Too cute.

"I think we should investigate."

CHAPTER FOUR

Serena looked up from her bag of gummy bears. "Huh?"

Raye gave her "the look." "Serena," she asked lowly, "do you ever pay attention during Sailor Scout meetings?"

Serena went back to her bag. "I would if you suggested investigating a Burger King."

"Why do you keep fiddling with that bag?"

Serena scowled and frantically tried to rip the plastic. "These stupid bags are impossible to open," she muttered. "God, what is this, child-proof?"

"Well, that would explain why you can't open it." Raye yanked the bag from Serena, ripped it open in one quick tear, and dropped it back in the blonde's hands. Serena snorted.

"Just for that comment," she said, pulling out a red gummy and popping it into her mouth, "I'm not going to share with you."

Amy pulled Luna into her lap and leaned against a pillar. The girls were seated on the porch of Raye's temple to discuss their super-hero tactics. The Cherry Hill Temple had become the unofficial meeting place for them when it came to Sailor

scouts on film

Scout business.

"Back on topic," Amy said, brushing a strand of hair behind her ear. "Serena, earlier today a group of girls from Crossroads Elementary were walking on the temple grounds and talking about their absent classmate. The girl in question has supposedly been absent for two days but won't return any of their phone calls."

"We caught the name of the girl," Raye continued. "It just so happens that the girl's mother stopped by this morning to pray for her daughter's recovery. She said the little girl was oddly obsessed with work and had suddenly turned cruel."

Serena chewed on three orange gummy bears and thought about that. The behavior certainly sounded familiar. The Negaverse?

"We think it's the Negaverse," Luna concluded.

Serena smiled. She was getting good at this super-hero stuff. She poured a mouthful of gummies into her mouth.

"OK," she mumbled through the gummies. "So now what do we do?"

"Well, we went to the girl's house, but she

had closed her shutters tightly and we couldn't get a glimpse of her. However, we did find out she'll be at the doll show she and her mother are having this weekend." Raye brushed her hair out behind her shoulder. "The girl's name is Mika Cassidy."

Serena nearly choked on the gummies. She fell to the ground, coughing on them, while Amy ran to her.

"Are you OK?" the blue-haired girl asked quickly. "Serena, how many of those things were you chewing?"

Serena swallowed. "Too many," she croaked. She looked unbelievably up at Raye. "But you've got to be kidding me. Little Mika Cassidy may be possessed by the Negaverse?"

Luna raised her eyebrows. "You know her?"

"Come on, Luna. And you say I'm not observant." Serena frowned. "Mika is Sammy's best friend. She came over a few weeks ago to do that science project about the planets, remember?"

Luna looked to the ground in thought. After a moment, she jerked her head up. "That little girl's name is Mika Cassidy?" she asked, shocked. "Dear god."

scouts on film

Serena rubbed the back of her neck nervously. She sure hoped sweet little Mika wasn't under the Negaverse's control. Unless...

"Wait a sec." Serena slapped her fist into her palm. "Sammy was really mean to Mika a few days ago, and he hasn't yet been able to apologize. Maybe that's why she's acting so weird!"

Amy touched her chin. "Really?"

Raye raised an eyebrow. "Mean enough to get her to lock herself in her room and bury herself in work?"

"I'm sure of it!"

Raye averted her eyes. "Well. Let's hope that's the case."

Amy let out a breath. "It's still suspicious," she said, looking over at Raye. "We still need to go to that doll show and investigate, just in case. We can't afford to make mistakes."

Raye laughed dryly. "Too true."

Serena stared down at her half-finished bag of gummy bears. Sighing, she rolled it up and shoved it in her pocket.

She didn't feel like eating anymore. Just thinking about Mika in the Negaverse's clutches made her lose her appetite. She truly hoped Mika would be OK.



Chapter 12

Love and Lessons

Saturday rolled around. The Cassidy Doll Show, taking place in a cleared section of Crossroads Art Museum, was packed with visitors. The many fans of dollmaking in Crossroads walked by the large displays and admired the fine work of Mrs. Cassidy and her daughter.

Nephrite slipped his hands into his pockets and smiled. "It's a wonderful show, Mrs. Cassidy," he said. "I knew you'd draw a big crowd."

Mrs. Cassidy murmured something and looked to the floor. Nephrite raised an eyebrow.

"Something wrong?"

scouts on film

The thin woman sighed. "It's Mika," she said after a moment. "She finished the doll copies you requested."

"Already?" Something flickered in Nephrite's dark blue eyes. "She's been very industrious these past few days."

Mrs. Cassidy let out a breath and bit her lip. "Too industrious," she replied in a quiet voice. "She made more than a dozen other dolls after making yours. She's hardly come out of her room since you came. She's been working incredibly hard, and it's so unlike her to overdo it."

Nephrite patted her on the shoulder. "I'm sure it's just the excitement of the show," he assured her. "I wouldn't worry about it." His teeth flashed in a smile. "You might as well let her put her energy towards something productive, yes?"

On the other side of the gallery, Serena handed a large basket over to Amy. "Luna's in here," the blonde explained. "Make sure she's not seen, OK?"

"Right." Amy held the basket with both hands and focused questioning eyes on Serena.

"Where are you going?"

"Back room." The blonde scratched her head. "Mika's there, and Sammy doesn't want to give her his gift by himself. Just being the good big sister, you know."

Amy nodded and opened the basket's top a crack. "Raye's checking out the dolls on the east side of the room. I'll cover the west."

Serena let out a breath. "All right. Once Sammy's successfully made the drop, I'll come join you guys."

"Sure. See you."

Serena left Amy and made her way to the front door of the show. Sammy was standing there, his homemade doll in his hands. His eyes lit up when he saw her arrive.

Serena jerked her thumb behind her. "Let's move it, kid," she ordered in a mock military tone. "We've got one sad little girl to cheer up."

Sammy nodded and hugged his doll to his chest. He averted his eyes. "Um, Serena?" he asked quietly.

"Yeah?"

His cheeks flushed slightly. "Thanks for

scouts on film

doing this," he mumbled. "Maybe you're not the worst sister on the face of the earth, after all."

Serena smiled. That was the closest to a compliment as she was ever going to get from Sammy. She rubbed his head affectionately.

"No problem, kiddo."

Sammy abruptly jerked backwards and tried to straighten his hair. "Don't do that," he snapped. "I don't want my hair to be crummy. Do you ever think?"

Serena sighed. She knew it was too good to last.

The Tsukino siblings walked to the back of the show and found the still-worried Mrs. Cassidy. After quickly explaining why they were there, she was more than happy to let them try and talk to Mika. She brought them to the back room and pointed to the door.

"She's in there," she explained, her eyes tired. "Although she hasn't come out since we came here, despite how much I've tried talking to her. I'll leave you alone with her."

Serena touched Mrs. Cassidy's shoulder. "Don't worry," she said softly. "We'll get Mika back

to normal."

Mrs. Cassidy closed her eyes and nodded. She went back to the show and left Serena and Sammy alone.

Serena turned to the door and held her breath. She certainly hoped the Negaverse hadn't possessed Mika, and that she and Sammy could cheer the girl up at last. The blonde looked to her brother.

"Got the gift?"

Sammy nodded and held up his Sailor Moon doll. He had made it out of dried clay and painted it with his paint set, but Sammy wasn't exactly da Vinci. The doll looked more like Hello Kitty if she was a pig and dressed in an oversized Halloween costume.

Oh, well. It was the thought that counted.

Serena gently knocked on the door. "Mika?" she called. "Are you in there? It's Serena and Sammy Tsukino."

"Go away!" came Mika's cruel snap. "I don't want to talk to anyone!"

Sammy curled his fingers over the doll. "Please," he called. "Let us in, Mika. Everyone's

scouts on film

worried, and you need to talk to someone. I made you a--"

"GO AWAY!"

Serena bit her lip. This looked bad. It was totally unlike Mika to be so mean. Maybe it was the Negaverse.

Serena prayed she was wrong.

"We're coming in," Serena called, putting her hand on the doorknob. Turning it carefully, she pushed open the door a crack and peeked inside.

The room was nearly pitch black. There was no light on and all the shutters were tightly drawn. Mika sat in the center of the room, fixing the hair of her newest doll. Over two dozen new dolls lay around her on the floor.

The light from the doorway made Mika squint. She snarled and looked up.

Serena sucked in a breath. Mika's cute face was twisted with rage, and her green eyes had turned a hard black. There was only one way someone's eyes could change color like that, and Serena had seen it many times before.

It was the Negaverse!

Sammy took a step into the room. "Mika..."



Mika screamed. Grabbing her doll to her chest, she jumped to her feet and bared her teeth at Sammy.

"GET OUT!" she shrieked. "Both of you, get out of here! You can't touch my dolls! You can't touch them! Do you hear me? Get OUT!"

Nephrite had left the doll show after the first few minutes, so he was standing in front of his star chart when Mika's picture turned red. He held up his palm and smiled.

"Jubo," he called. "Your time has come. Heed my call! I command you to come forth and drain that child's energy!"

Serena grabbed Sammy and covered his eyes as the demon was released from Nephrite's symbol. She watched in shock as a twelve-foot, porcelain-skinned, blue-eyed, bald-headed, evil-looking doll demon formed from the black bolt of energy. Mika collapsed to the floor.

Jubo took one look at Mika, then turned to Serena and scowled. "What do we have here?" the doll asked in a high-pitched, squeaky voice.

scouts on film

"Seems I'll have to get rid of you first."

Serena swallowed. It was every kid's nightmare...death by giant doll!

"What's going on?" Sammy cried from Serena's arms. He broke from her hold angrily. "Serena, why are you covering my eyes--what?" The boy gasped and took a step back. "What is that?"

Jubo picked up one of Mika's dolls and threw it at Sammy. The doll came to life in mid-air, screeching and baring its razor-sharp teeth.

Serena knocked Sammy out of the way. The doll crashed into the wall with a strangled yelp.

"Sammy!" Serena shouted, pushing her brother toward the door as she stomped on the dazed toy. "Get out of here!"

Sammy noticed the unconscious Mika. "No!" he shouted, running to his friend. "Mika, I'll save you!"

Jubo angrily swatted Sammy away before he could reach the little girl. The boy went crashing into a rack of dolls, and his unconscious body crumpled to the floor. His Sailor Moon doll smashed into hundreds of tiny pieces.

SAILOR MOON

Serena stared at him in horror. "Sammy!" she cried, stepping back. She whipped to Jubo with blazing blue eyes. "You are so going to get it, you overgrown bald Barbie!"

Jubo put one porcelain hand on her porcelain hip. "And what are you going to do?" she asked in her squeaky voice.

Serena threw her hand into the air. "You're going to wish you didn't ask," she said with a growl. "MOON PRISM POWER MAKE-UP!"

The standard rainbow lights engulfed Serena, and in a matter of moments she was Sailor Moon. She ripped the tiara off her forehead and flung it at Jubo with all her might.

"MOON TIARA ACTION!"

The golden disk streaked through the air with a high-pitched whine. Jubo furrowed her painted eyebrows and knocked the discus aside. The tiara crashed through a window and landed on the outdoor grass.

Serena's mouth dropped in disbelief. That gigantic toy did not just swat her tiara!

Jubo picked up two more dolls. "Not good enough," she mocked, throwing the toys. Serena

scouts on film

frantically dodged them, then dove through the broken first-floor window and rolled to a stop on the grass outside.

Impossible! Serena thought as she scrambled to her feet and grabbed her failed weapon. If her tiara didn't work on the demon, just what was she supposed to do? When she was a kid, Serena had always put dolls she didn't like in a bag in the attic, but that didn't help her here. No bag was going to hold a psychotic doll demon, no matter how far back in her attic she stashed it.

High-pitched screeches made her turn. Several of Mika's evil dolls were scrambling out the window after her, and Jubo flew out behind them. Serena choked and looked around for an escape route.

"MARS FIREBALLS CHARGE!"

Anti-evil parchments shot through the air and stuck to the villains' foreheads. The tiny dolls dropped lifelessly to the ground, and Jubo was frozen in place.

Serena whipped around happily. "Mars!"

Sailor Mars and Sailor Mercury ran to join their leader, Luna trailing by their heels. Raye

stood protectively in front of Serena while Amy went to check the blonde for injuries.

"Well, well," Raye said, sizing Jubo up. "So this is what those commercials mean by 'ultra-big action figures?'"

Serena took Amy's hands. "My tiara didn't work," the Champion of Justice said quickly. "Is there anything you can do? Find the demon's weakness or something?"

Amy nodded and pressed her blue earring. Her VR goggles flashed onto her face. "I'll scan it," she said, pressing her earring as trails of data lit up the goggles. "I'm sure I can find her weak point."

Luna turned to the demon. "Quickly," she ordered. "The monster will be attacking again in a moment."

As if to emphasize Luna's statement, Jubo suddenly shook free of Raye's spell and ripped the parchment from her forehead. The demon doll shrieked with rage.

"You little pests!" she cried, pulling off one of her arms and throwing it. "I'll destroy you before you have time to scream!"

The arm shot through the air like a missile,

scouts on film

and Raye barely managed to dodge it. The arm sliced through a few strands of her hair and buried itself in the ground behind her.

Jubo snarled and regenerated her arm. She ripped it off and aimed again.

"Careful," Raye warned, getting in front of the scanning Amy. "Those limbs are sharper than they look."

Serena scowled. She had had just about enough of this stupid doll. Not only had the demon possessed Mika, she had hurt Sammy. She was going to pay big time!

Serena spread her feet and pointed at Jubo. "You hurt two children who are involved in blossoming love," she called. "Not only that, but you're giving nice, well-behaved dolls a bad reputation. I am Sailor Moon, Champion of Justice and defender of children, and in the name of the Moon, you're punished!"

Jubo snarled and threw her arm. Raye pushed Serena out of the projectile's way just in the nick of time.

"Sailor Moon!" Luna barked. "Don't let your guard down!"

HAIR MOON

Raye pulled the blonde to her feet and scowled. "Just had to give your speech, didn't you?"

Serena brushed off her skirt and thrust her nose in the air. "Of course," she replied haughtily. "I have to, or these monsters will never learn."

"Her right ankle!"

Serena and Raye turned to Amy, just as the blue-haired girl vanished her goggles. The brainy Scout pointed frantically to Jubo.

"Sailor Moon!" she cried. "Throw your tiara at the demon's right ankle!"

Serena ducked as another arm whizzed by her head. "Right," she called as she gripped her tiara once more. She aimed, then threw the weapon with all her might.

"MOON TIARA ACTION!"

The discus crashed into Jubo's right ankle with a loud crunch. The demon screamed as golden light traveled up her body.

"No!" she cried. "No, I can't be defeated!" She screeched and thrashed her limbs, but it was no use. She burst into dust and sprinkled to the ground in a neat little pile, Serena's golden head-

scouts on film

band clunking to the grass beside her.

Serena let out a breath. Finally, she thought. That fight had been a nasty one.

"Thanks, Mercury," the blonde said as she sat down on the ground. "You sure saved our bacon this time."

Amy smiled. "That's what I'm here for."

Luna nodded approvingly. "Good work, girls," she commended. "All of you are learning to work well as a team. Keep this up and we'll defeat the Negaverse for sure."

Serena ran a hand through her golden bangs and sighed. "Talk about one unsafe toy," she murmured. "I'd like to see Mattel get that doll on the market."

Raye smirked. "Batteries and a pleasant attitude not included."

A few minutes later, Sammy awoke with a groan. He gripped his head, his blurry eyes turning up to the destroyed room around him.

His gaze fell on the unconscious Mika. He gasped and crawled over to her, eyes filled with fear. He grabbed her shoulders and shook her fran-

tically.

"Mika!" he cried. "Oh, Mika, please be OK! Wake up! It's me, Sammy!"

Mika moaned. Sammy leaned over her as her eyes fluttered open. Her gaze focused on his face, then she gasped and sat upright. She whipped her head around to take in the room.

"Oh my god!" she cried, covering her mouth. "Sammy, what happened?"

Sammy frowned. "I don't remember much," he replied. "Just that someone attacked you, and I got knocked out when I tried to get to you." He took her hands, blue eyes concerned. "Are you OK? You passed out, and I was scared that you were hurt."

Mika's eyes widened. "Y-your forehead!" she exclaimed, touching the large scrape just above his eyes. She brushed his bangs back so she could examine it. "You got this trying to help me?"

Sammy turned pale under her touch, but he swallowed. He looked into her eyes and took her hands again.

"Mika," he said softly. "I-I'm sorry about what I did to you in class the other day. I was flat-

scouts on film

tered you wanted to give me that doll, but when the kids starting saying we were in love, I just got...embarrassed, I guess. It was really stupid of me, and I'm sorry I hurt your feelings." He took a breath, then pulled himself out of his slouch. "Will you forgive me?"

Mika stared at him a moment with her mouth open. Tears formed in her eyes, and she hiccupped. She suddenly threw her arms around his neck and hugged him tightly.

"Oh, Sammy!" she cried. "I forgive you! I'm just so happy to have my best friend back! I missed you so much!"

Sammy's face turned bright red. He cleared his throat and gently parted from Mika's arms. His eyes fell on his shattered gift, and he frowned.

"I made a Sailor Moon doll for you," he said, picking up a fragment. "I guess it got smashed in the attack. I'm sorry. I'll make you another."

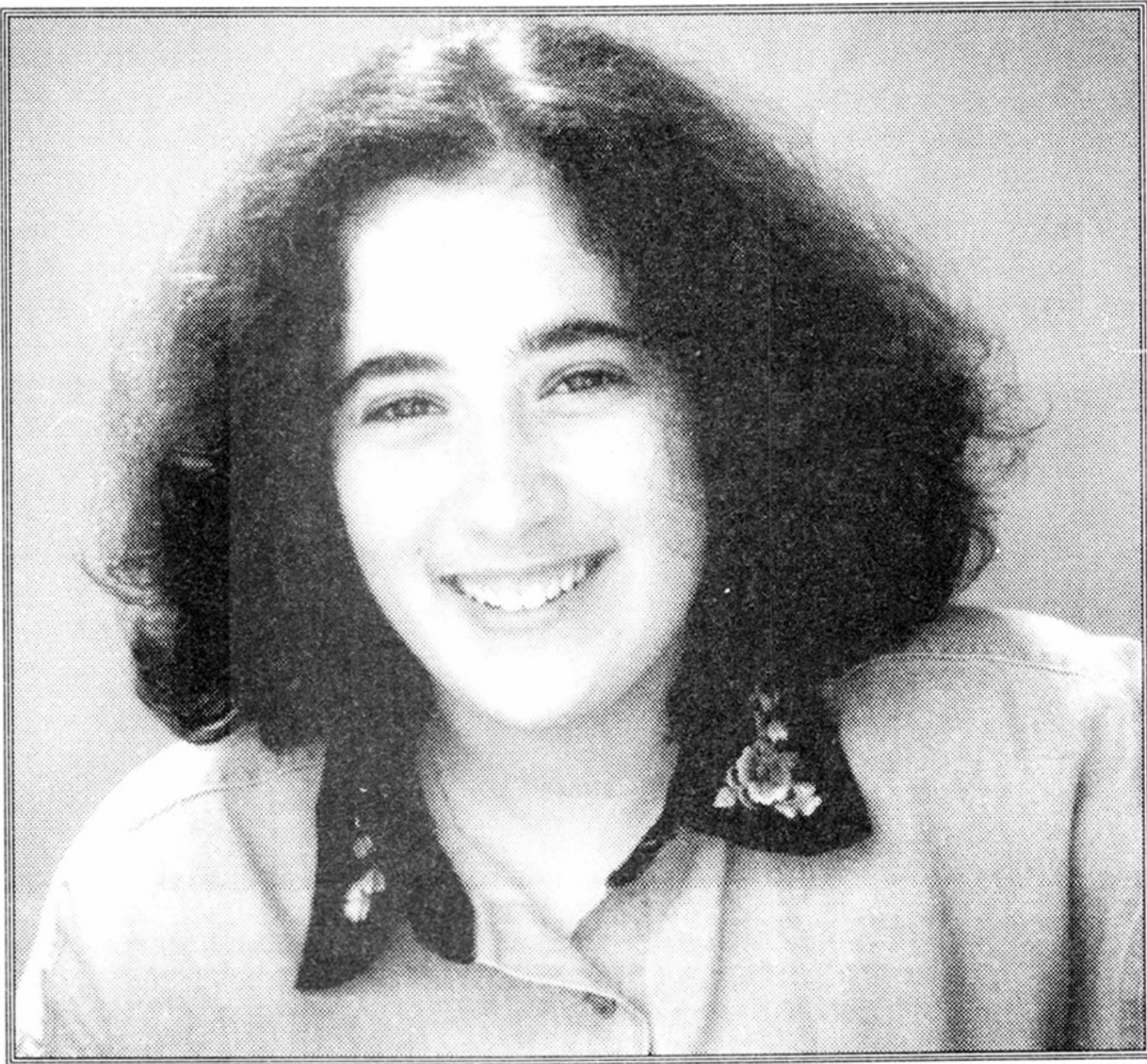
Mika shook her head violently, a huge smile on her face. "Oh, no," she said, hugging him again. "I'm the dollmaker in this town. I'll make you a Sailor Moon doll, and it'll be a million times better than that doll that won me the other contest!"

Sammy blushed. Smiling shyly, he put his arms around Mika's neck and returned her tight hug. He closed his eyes and mouthed five words, five words that she couldn't hear.

"I love you, Mika Cassidy."



About the Writer



Lianne Sentar began her career as a writer at just 13 years-old working on an extensive fantasy novel entitled *Thief*. During the next two years, Ms. Sentar wrote hundreds of pages of fan-fiction and published them both on her website (http://members.tripod.com/~Lianne_Sentar/) as well as on other international fan-fic sites. Based on her initial online publishing success, Ms. Sentar self-published her first novella *Rain* in the fall of 1998. Since its initial release, *Rain* has been through four reprints and continues to grow in popularity. In the summer of 1999, 17-year-old Lianne began writing the *Sailor Moon* novel adaptations with the second *Sailor Moon* novel, *The Power of Love*. Ms. Sentar is currently working on her second original novel, the fantasy *Children of the Sky*. Ms. Sentar lives with her family in Connecticut, USA.