

A pencil sketch of a mountain range with a church in the foreground. The mountains are jagged and covered in snow, with a large, dark, triangular rock formation in the center. The church is a small, two-story building with a steeple and several windows. The overall style is a soft, textured pencil drawing.

MORTIS
Chapter 1: Krie
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KENNETH

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March 21st, 1985

Clouds overcast the sky above the orphanage, the sound of thunder crackling in the distance as the clouds darken. The children were inside waiting in anticipation for rain to start pouring, with some conjuring up plans on how to escape to play in the rain but being caught and scolded by the nuns. One of the nuns who was around her 40s had made some distinct lunch for two of the older children who spent most of their time within a garage that sat across the yard from the orphanage. She was about to head out to retrieve the boys but had to stay to help with preparing lunch for the other children as one of the other sisters was sick that day.

"Boys" the nun called out to a couple of boys that were helping set the table. "Yes, sister Amy" the boys said passively, putting down a stack of plates on the table. "Can you go get Krie and Zylwesta for lunch" sister Amy presents rests the two lunches on the table. The boys shrunk a little "Krie?!" the centremost boy looks up towards sister Amy with kitten eyes "sister can you get somebody else as were a bit busy wi-" sister Amy interrupts the boy with a more authoritative tone "I don't want hear it now go take it to the boys" the 3 boys look at each other with unwary but nod their heads to sister Amy and head outside towards the garage.

Along the way the boys were exceedingly anxious as they approached the garage, "dame why do we have to go get them".

"Why didn't she just bring the food to them" the smallest of the 3 boys began to shake a little. They reach the metal garage door, their anxiety reaching peak as they stare with dread "Because it's the rules to eat at the table" the boy in the centre says with a slight chitter in his teeth. "it's ok, all we have to do is ask them to come for lunch" the centre boy releases a nervous laugh "and she said that Zylwesta was with him so there's a 50/50 chance that he answers the door".

"Yea, he's a nice bloke" the boys mood lightened a bit but that did little to sway the thought of Krie answering the door. He took a deep breath and the centre boy knock 3 times on the metal door. The door swings open, a tall figure wearing a cloth trench coat with a black eagle with a red peak and feet on the back, unbuttoned revealing a black shirt with a skull imprint and an hourglass shaped birthmark on the man's neck. Though it was dark cause of the clouds his white hair shined brightly, complimented by his crystal amethyst eyes.

"What is it?" the man stares at the boys with a blank face. The 3 boys start to shiver "uh, mister Krie, s-sister Amy sent us to ah".

"To tell you that lunch is r-ready" the smallest interrupts and finishes the centre boy sentence. "Oh, well tell Amy that me and zel will be there in a minute" Krie begins to close the and the boys let out a sigh of relief, but Krie looks back at them "make sure to avoid the mylings". The 3 boys back up at Krie with a little confusion and fear "A myling?".

Krie looks at them crystal sharply “yea mylings, the ghosts of children who were left abandoned in the cold and died. They wonder around finding unsuspecting pray and latch on to them, forcing them to walk until they lose strength and are crushed by the mylings weight”. The boys began shaking again, having fearful faces “but, there aren’t any around here surely”. Krie leaned forward to stare down the children “but I heard that many children got left behind on this left behind on this land in the old days” the boys now felt overwhelmingly anxious, they teeth chattering out of fear.

“But do you know how I know that some wonder around here” the boys were dreading Krie’s answers “h-how?” Krie kneels to their level “because there’s one right- “a small figure jumps from the bushes and lands on one of the boys back. The boy screams and starts frantically panting down his back “GET IT OFF, GET IT OFF!” the other boys were frozen in fear. Eventually the grabs and throws the figure back into the bush, running off back to the orphanage with the other boys following finding sudden strength.

Krie gives out a small laughter “the sisters are gonna rip us one for this” Krie inspects where the figure had landed, hearing rustling in the bushes as a man around the same age as Krie with blonde hair hidden under a hat step out holding a teddy bear with glue on its hands and feet. “But it was fucking fun” he high fives Krie after a successful scare “come Zylwesta, we don’t want to give the sisters the shits” Zylwesta clasps his hands together “I hope they made my favourite”.

“Ah yes egg on toast” Krie tease his friend as they walk back to the orphanage while Zylwesta scorns Kries remark.

The boys enter the orphanage dining room, a chandelier hangs from the ceiling, the smell of food freshly made filled the air. Sister Amy walks towards the with her traditional serious face “hello boys, nice of you to finally join us” Zylwesta waves towards the sister “how’s it going sister Amy”.

“Oh, just making helping to make lunch and calm down some frighten children” sister Amy motions towards the 3 boys that had Krie and Zylwesta had scared, who were visibly shaking. Zylwesta places his hand on the back of his neck and gives out a nervous laugh. “What have I told you 2 about scaring the little ones, your gonna give them nightmares” sister Amy looks at them with a stern face which makes Zylwesta shrinks a little “we were only having a bit of fun, before we go and everything”.

“we’ll keep scaring them and I’ll have to lock you out of the garage” sister Amy crosses her arms. “So, you’re closing the door behind us” Krie remarks at sister Amys proposed punishment. “don’t get smart with me young man” sister Amy mood dampened at Krie comment knowing that Krie’s 18th birthday was 2 weeks away and Zylwesta’s isn’t that far off, neither of them will be obligated to stay at the orphanage. Amy motions the boys to the dining table “take a sit, I’ll bring out your lunch” the boys smile and move around the table to a couple of empty seats, while Amy goes to the kitchen and returns with the boys’ lunch.

“Here you go boys, pork ribs for Krie, and spaghetti on toast for Zylwesta” the food was still steaming and released a pleasant aroma. “Thanks sis” Zylwesta sticks his fork into the

spaghetti and curling it around the fork, while Krie cuts off one rib and skins all the meat off the bone. "18 years Krie, it doesn't seem that long ago when you first come to the orphanage" Krie looked back up at Amy feeling less enthusiastic at the topic. "I remember when you used to believe in all that stuff about ghost and what not" Zylwesta chews on pasta source drenched toast.

"Ah yes you would insist that you could see spirits roaming the halls and scare the rest of the children with all your story's that you claimed the spirits told you" Amy giggles remembering all the times she had to calm the children who were scared from his story's. "And you always got into fights with-".

"Zylwesta! Let's not dwell on that shall we" Zylwesta was a little startled at Amys sudden interruption "sorry sister".

"so, have you found a place and some place to work" Krie looks back down at his food "no not yet sister"

"Well, I hope you find one soon" sister Amy sits down to eat her food with the children. After the boys finished eating, they joined the rest of the children in praying before heading back to the garage "always in that bloody garage those two" Amy starts pack up the plates for washing.

The ground was wet from a slight drizzle of rain which almost made Zylwesta slip and fall on his ass before reaching and unlocking the garage door. the door opens to release the smell of cigarette and oil. There was a table full of vehicle parts, dingy rusted tools and car magazines. There was a Kawasaki z1 900 bike which sat in the centre surrounded oil-stained rags and jerry cans. A lounge and tv sat in the corner with transformers toy surrounding it.

Zylwesta gives out a sigh and grabs a toy trailer off the ground "you want one Krie?" he opens the trailer and pulls out a pack of smokes "sure mate, why not" Zylwesta lights his smoke before handing Krie on with the lighter. Krie sits down in his work chair, inhales and releases a puff of smoke while Zylwesta turns on the tv. "Call me over when transformers are on" Krie picks up a car magazine, studying all the newer cars and fantasises about owning the 69-dodge charger on the cover.

The tv open to a news report "dammit how long is this going to take" Zylwesta fiddles with his toys. "Over these past couple of weeks, bodies have been reported around the local area half buried in the ground. Some of the victims we're reported missing as far back as February, they all had their spinal cords crushed. Police have not singled out a suspect but are into person who works with heavy machinery".

"That didn't happen that far from here" Zylwesta turn to face Krie only to see him pouring all his focus on a small smudge on his bikes paint. Krie swipes a rag and spray off his work bench and aggressively rubs the smudge until the only thing that could be seen on the bike was his own reflection. "Fuck's sake Krie" Zylwesta shakes his head but is then fill with excitement as the transformers theme plays.

Hard knocks came from the front door stuttering Zylwesta who quickly burnt his fingers by using them to put out his cigarette. Krie put out his cigarette and through it out the window before opening the door “ah Krie good to see you” Father Alfred waved as he greeted. “gooday father Alfred” Krie heard Zylwesta soak a rag with cold water to cool his burnt fingers “how’s it going father”.

“Good thanks, ah sorry to interrupt you boys but, Krie my car is having issues with the oil, can you have a look at it please” Krie smiled “sure father, bring her in and I’ll have a look at it”. Alfred clasps his hands together “thank you Krie that is most appreciated” Krie began to set up his workshop and Zylwesta opens the garage door “oh and boys” Krie and Zylwesta look back toward Father Alfred “no smoking on the grounds it’s a sin” the boys were stunned at Alfred’s perception; the father held his hand for the boy’s pack of cigarettes which the boys reluctantly handed over.

Krie pops the bonnet of Alfred’s car and pulls out a rod that leads to an oil pipe, he wipes the rod clean. Krie puts the rod in and out looks for a small mark on the rod, noticing the oil level below the mark “seems your low on oil” Krie looks under the car and notices small droplets of oil on the ground. Krie walks over to a cupboard and pulls out a jack to lift the car and stilts. After lifting the car on the stilts Krie places down flatten boxes of cardboard underneath the car to lay on.

Krie takes off his trench coat and takes a bucket underneath the car and starts changing the oil. Alfred picks up Krie coat “I remember the day I gave you this” Alfred pulls out a hankie from his pocket to cough in “hey Krie I’ve picked out a punch of houses that I was thinking we could go look at” Krie pulls himself out from under the car with a down look on his face “sure father”.

Alfred kneels to Krie “hey I get that everything is changing around you but that’s just how everything just simply works, time only moves forward, and we simply have to go with it”. Zylwesta came around the front of the car with a tub full of oil “And hey, well won’t have to abide by the sisters rules we can do whatever the fuck we want”.

“You mean my rules Zylwesta?” Alfred crossed his arms and stared at Zylwesta “ah yea right, when we get out, we won’t have to listen to father Alfred”. Alfred pinches his nose in disappoint, while Krie releases a small laugh “alright I’ll just change the oil and we’ll go have a look”.