

This is a work of fiction based upon the manga/anime characters of **Yu Yu Hakusho**. This story was written for entertainment purposes only and may be freely shared (that means not-for-profit) as long as the disclaimer and the author's name accompany it and none of the contents are altered.

First Impressions

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{I don't wanna.}

The woman's rich laughter filled both thoughts and sound. {I'm sorry, but you have to.}

{I don't want to. It's warm and comfy here. Out there it's noisy and crowded and bright... and I wouldn't be with you.}

{Sweet one, you have to.} Her smile could be felt in the thoughts, along with her love. {I'll still be there, taking care of you, holding you close.}

{It won't be the same.}

{I know that my dear. It won't be the same for me either, but it can be wonderful in it's own way, you'll see.}

{I don't wanna. I'll stay here forever, with you.}

The women's thoughts, still fond, held a trace of exasperation, {My son, it's not so bad. We all do it, you know. We all were born once.}

... ..

I knew I shouldn't have come out. I knew it. Damn them all. Preparing to object mightily to this new situation, the baby instead found a rough cloth being stuffed inside his mouth.

"Gods, what a set of lungs. Guess you're a healthy little brat. But if you don't keep quiet for the next half-hour I'm going to decide that it's easier to carry a dead brat than a live one."

And then my dad will tear you to bits! But the baby already had a strong sense of self-preservation and decided it was definitely in his interests to keep quiet for now. His yells back in the nursery hadn't helped any, when people had always come to his cries before, so obviously this was a new problem. *Momma... where are you? Momma...* The baby looked around as much as he could, noting the empty corridor and darkness where normally there would be light and people. *Where is my mother? Why has nobody come for me?* He glanced up at the face of the demon carrying him. *This is not one of my keepers. Who is he? What does he want with me?*

... ..

Cold. The ground was cold, the air was cold. He was wet and tired and hungry. And he missed his mother. And the father that was supposed to protect him. Whimpering, the baby tried to be brave, but it was too much for him and he started to cry in earnest.

Some time went by and then he felt somebody coming closer, *It's that horrid demon again!* The baby continued to cry, caught in a situation he couldn't do anything about. *I'm suppose to be protected, not thrown out in the wild makai like the demons.*

"Well what do we have here?" A soft voice asked the air. "Hey there, little one, did somebody go and leave you all alone?" *No, damn it! I was stolen from my warm crib and my Momma and my home! What a stupid question!!!* Warm hands picked him up and cuddled him close to a warm body. At the comforting action, the baby looked up in surprise... but it wasn't anybody he knew. He cried harder. *I didn't ask to be born! I was happy with momma. Why did she make me come out? I didn't want to and now look what's happened!*

"Gods, what a set of lungs." The new voice was amused, unlike the first demon, who had just been annoyed and irritated. The baby gulped in more air and decided to try to summon his servants. They had to be around here somewhere. He couldn't have been left all alone... *Where's my mother, where is my father? Why haven't they come for me?*

"Hoo... You don't like this much, do you?" With a grin, the new demon laid the baby down. After taking his dark blue cloak off, he tore it into strips and made an improvised diaper, getting rid of the old one. Intensely startled, the baby stopped crying and instead just lay there and watched the demon. And it did feel better... After the demon had changed him, the baby was picked up in those warm hands again and held close to the warm body. Shivering, the baby decided this was much better than being laid down on a cold rocky floor, and he reached up with his small hand to pat at the demon that was holding him. With a laugh, the demon grinned down at him, "Intelligent enough to know your best interest, I see."

There was a snort from further away, "Miracles do happen: You got the brat to shut up." At the sound of the hated voice, the baby stiffened and cried out.

"Well, I had him quiet until you decided to show your ugly face." The friendly voice hadn't changed, despite the words, it was still low and soft and amused. The baby lifted his head to see the demon who was holding him smiling at the demon who had taken him from his home. "You know, idiot – a baby isn't one of your normal items that you can steal and then put on a shelf and forget about. A baby needs a bit more care – like cleaning and feeding."

The thief grunted, "What a pain. It's done nothing but cry since I got it."

"Well, I would too if I was left all alone on a cold floor with dirty diapers."

"Like hell, you would have – that isn't a very good survival trait."

"And being quiet and then starving to death is a survival trait?"

"In the makai, that second has better odds."

A dark shadow passed over the face of the demon that was holding the baby. "Never mind this conversation, where were you when I arrived? I came right through the wards."

"Don't like either of the odds, do you? Even though you managed to beat both of them." The thief shrugged, "I felt you come in – the wards wouldn't have let anybody else through. I was back in the storage room getting something to shut the brat up." He tossed something small at the other demon.

Shifting quickly around to hold the baby with one arm, the demon caught the object with the other. "A pacifier? Oh, that really takes care of the basic issue."

"Hn." The first demon walked to the entrance of the cave and looked out, "It's not a normal one. I stole it years and years ago. But beyond its other properties, it's still a pacifier. That'll keep him quiet long enough. I don't plan on keeping the brat around long enough to make anything else necessary."

In the act of coaxing the baby to accept the pacifier in his mouth, the demon paused and looked up, "You're not keeping him?"

"Hell no!" The demon snorted and turned back, looking carefully at the demon holding the baby, "Hiei, I did not bring you home another stupid stray pet that you can adopt like Murgy over there." The

demon pointed to an orange cat curled up on a cushion. "I get rather amused at you and all your little animals, but this fellow I've got definite plans for." He glanced out a window, "And those plans are getting closer. You better get out of here, Hiei, before they get here."

Wrinkling his forehead, the demon asked softly, "Dyouma, what have you done?" After a moment, he looked seriously down at the baby he was holding and reached a hand up to take off the headband he was wearing. In the middle of his forehead, a third eye opened and stared down at the baby.

Try and influence me? The baby glared back, {I am not that weak!} He could feel a warmth on his forehead where his dad had laid his hand after he was born.

"No, you are not," the demon seriously replied to the baby's thought before he returned his attention to the other, "Dyouma, this is Enma's son. His newborn baby son, the heir of the Kingdom of the Dead. He is even marked with Enma's sign on his forehead, Child of Enma, Enma Junior, Koenma."

"You think I don't know that, Hiei?" The first demon was laughing. "Calm down." He walked to a chair and flung himself into it, "Ah, you should have been there, Hiei! It was great. I slipped past every one of the guards, disengaged every single warning system, drugged the whole nursery with no one the wiser, and got out with the most precious treasure of all, Enma's son! They don't even guard the three sacred objects as carefully as they had this little fellow watched! I was great! I was wonderful!" He grinned, a cocksure, exuberant grin, "I'm the greatest living thief – congratulate me, Hiei!"

The demon with the spiky hair looked sourly down at the baby and then gave the same look to the demon in the chair, "I will just as soon as I hear your plan for getting away with it."

"Eh," the demon waved a hand, "Who needs plans. I've accomplished something nobody else in a thousand years could." He grinned again, "And when Enma shows up to reclaim his son, well, that's the moment I draw my knife across his throat and prove that the gods aren't all powerful." He laughed, "Just thinking about the look on Enma's face as I thwart his plans is rewarding."

His face grim, Hiei carefully laid the baby down next to the old cat. The cat opened a blurry eye and yawned, curling around the baby before going back to sleep again. Hiei turned to the other demon, "I should have known. Three years ago, I felt

something different about you. I didn't know what it was, then. But now I do. Dyouma, you're bored."

Continuing to slouch in the chair, the demon shrugged, "It happens, Hiei. You're still young. Wait until you're a thousand years old and then see how many challenges there are left for you to accomplish." The demon got up and picked up a book and casually tossed it at Hiei, who caught it and laid it down on a nearby shelf. "The grimoire of Natili Yu Granil. The most powerful sorcerer in three lands. He had nothing in his locks that I hadn't seen already and it took me less than a day to make the plan and steal the book." He walked to the shorter demon and laid his hands on his shoulders, "Hiei, I needed a challenge. This baby was the perfect opportunity. I've accomplished what no other thief in history ever could, and ever will. I've stolen a child of the gods," he grinned, "that makes me as close to a god as a demon can be."

"A bored demon is a demon close to death." Hiei snorted and moved back away from the other demon. "If you want to commit suicide, you shouldn't involve anybody else in your plans." He walked over and looked down at the baby and the cat, his dark red eyes glinting. "Child of Enma... stolen and helpless..."

{Like hell I am!}

One thin dark eyebrow rose at the comment and a half-smile flitted across the demon's face. "I won't argue with you right now, but who's the one with the dirty diaper?"

Through the pacifier stuck in his mouth, the child screamed in rage. Even if he was a baby, he still had his pride and that was a direct cut against it. But even as he screamed, he felt the sound and his anger channeling not outwards toward the object of his rage, but the rei was absorbed into the pacifier in his mouth. Blinking in startlement, the baby turned his attention to the object, *What the hell?*

"Hiei, are you talking to the baby?"

"Of course. It's a child of the gods, he's been aware since before he was born."

The other demon snorted, "I hear you drove your mother bonkers with the comments only she could hear."

A dark flame flared around the smaller demon. "Shut up, Dyouma. I'm claiming the child."

"Oh like hell." The demon again walked forward and drew an affectionate hand through the spiky hair, fluffing it out. "This one is mine, Hiei. Go find your own godling to play with."

"I think this one will do nicely. I've already got several Games in mind for it. With a little proper care, it could even last for that thousand years you were talking about." Hiei tilted his head up to meet the other demon's gaze, "Join me?"

The demon's sky blue eyes glinted as he looked down at the dark red ones, "That won't work, Hiei. I want to do this my way. I want my name to be remembered for a thousand years. I've got it all planned out and you're not going to change my mind."

"Boredom passes," Hiei paused and then reached a hand up to the demon's face, "I could help..."

It was the other demon's turn to snort and step away, "Thanks for the offer, but no thanks. You're not my type, Hiei." He glanced out the window again, "Time for you to get out of here. I allowed you the freedom of my territory, but you're pushing it."

There was a slight poofing sound and the baby and the thief both turned to look at the short dark demon who was standing with fire curling around his hand, "If it's death you want, it's a death you'll get. By my hand, not Enma's." Hiei stepped out to an open spot in the room, standing lightly on the stone ground, balancing his body, preparing for a fight.

Dyouma frowned, a spark of fear flashing through his eyes before he laughed, "You had me going there for a moment, Hiei. I know you can't harm me. It was the condition on which you had access to my lands a hundred years ago and even you can't break a promise made in the void."

The rei in the room whirled in invisible streams, buffeting loose paper and cloth and making the baby Koenma catch his breath at the power displayed as Hiei changed forms. Eyes appeared and opened over a body that had shaded a dark green. The spiky hair was divided in points, claws and teeth had sharpened into points, the third eye was glowing bright.

The thief stepped back, "Hiei?"

"Funny thing about people, Dyouma," Hiei's voice was still the same soft tones it had been through all of the conversation, the same friendly-seeming voice he'd used when speaking to the baby the first time. The demon's face wore a grin... but he did not seem very friendly now, "People change. Circumstances change. And bonds disappear like magic in the air." He shifted his weight slightly, the red-green flames in his hand changing to black fire that created holes in the stone ground where it

dripped off his hand. "I felt the promise fade three years ago. My promise was made to my friend. You are not that person anymore, and I want that godling."

The demon gulped, fear showing in his eyes again, "Uh, Hiei... Come on, we can talk about this." He reached out and picked up a knife off the table, "I stole this two hundred and sixteen years ago – do you remember? It was the first time I met you, fierce little demon holding on by your wits and your teeth."

Hiei laughed, "I wasn't that young then, and I certainly am not now. Dyouma, are you going to be difficult about this? You know you cannot match me."

Glancing around the room, Dyouma's gaze fell upon the baby godling lying next to the cat. As the demon's eyes locked briefly with the baby's, Koenma read there the despair of knowing a death was upon him. And, also within was relief. Koenma puzzled over the second one for a long time, even as he was fascinated by the drama in front of him.

The thief put the knife down on the table and smiled, "Well, if I have to die, than maybe I should get to choose my death." He raised an open hand to Hiei, "I wouldn't mind one like Bathsha's."

The red gaze was unreadable. The fire around his hand changed to a blue color as Hiei walked forward to where Dyouma stood, "I thought you said I wasn't your type." He reached out with blue fire and clasped hands with the other demon.

Shudders went through the demon and he gasped loudly, his eyes widening. "I think... I didn't know what I missed. Ah, Hiei..." he leaned down to kiss the shorter demon.

Hiei raised up on his toes to meet the demon and he pressed close to him, bringing his hands around to hold the older demon tightly.

{Oh yuck! I do not want to see this!!!! That's disgusting. Go away and do it in private.}

Hiei's chuckle was only audible to the baby. {Pay attention and you might learn something.}

About to make a sarcastic answer, Koenma's attention was riveted by the sight of Dyouma's hand picking up the knife again, even as he held Hiei close. *One of them wants to kill me and the other wants to use me. What the hell am I suppose to do about this?* As young as he was, Koenma already knew that the second could be far worse than the first. And his dad was coming for him. But... {Hiei.}

There was another amused chuckle. {I see it. The eyes on my body are not for decoration alone.} Disengaging his mouth from the other demon, Hiei whispered softly, "Too predictable, Dyouma..." And then there was a flurry of motion around the two demons. When it was over, the thief lay on the ground, the knife through his heart. Hiei stood, looking impassively down. He glanced over to the baby, "And now I have to do something about you before your dad gets here." Reaching down, Hiei pulled out the knife and then directed a stream of flames at the body, incinerating it completely.

Koenma stared in shock. {But he was your friend!}

"Aye. Remember that, Chibi-chan. Your first lesson of the makai – don't trust anybody." Hiei leaned forward, drawing the knife with the blood still on it across the baby's cheek, leaving a trailing stain there. "I will have my fun with you, and if you are strong enough, you will provide me with a thousand years of entertainment." He put the knife away and picked up the baby, absently petting the cat as he did so, "But first we have to lay a false trail for your dad and the other trackers. They will not find this place."

Koenma shivered as Hiei carried him out from the domicile. It was very cold.

End.