Chapter 8
Carpainter Goes Boom-Bang

The whole sight sent chills down my spine. Past the cave was a tiny village, much smaller than either Onett or Twoson. That was not what scared me though. What spooked me was the fact that everything I could see was blue. The grass. The buildings. The clothes of the townspeople. Even this text is blue, for some reason. There was nothing that was not blue. As I stood in place, dumbfounded by the scenery, I was startled by a women with a wide smile silently approaching me from my right.

“Hello sir! Welcome to Happy-Happy Village, the most perfect place on Earth! Have you come to convert to the ways of Happy-Happyism?” the women asked as she continued to smile in that terrifying way.

“What? Uhh, no, I didn’t come to convert to Happy-Happy whateverism. I came looking for a girl, Paula Polestar,” I said, shivering. As I spoke, the woman’s smile continued to widen until her cheeks couldn’t go any further.

“Mistress Polestar? Why, she is our new high priestess! Or, she will be, for at the moment, she is being prepared for her debut. While she is preparing, she is staying in a nice house at the other side of that cave.” The women pointed to cave on the other side of the village. “Oh, but do not think of seeing Mistress Polestar, for she cannot be seen until she has ascended like Master Carpainter,” the women said, giggling at the mention of the one named Carpainter.

“Master Carpainter? First of all, what kind of name is that, and second of all, who the heck is that?” I asked, still shivering.

“*gasp* You do not know of Master Carpainter, the holy one? He is the one who received the revelation. The revelation that stated
perfection lies in the color blue. That is why we strive to paint all that is not blue, for we want the world to relish in perfection. It is quite simple, you see. And, just by looking at your dress, I can tell that you have not made yourself one with blue. Come with me, and I will save your soul from the evil of anti-blue," the women said as she grabbed my arm.

“What the hey! Get off of me you creep! I don’t want to convert to your stupid religion; I just want to find Paula!” I yelled, attracting the attention of the other citizens.

“*gasp* You dare oppose the perfection of blue? You are not a person, but a demon in disguise! We shall send you to the depths of the underworld! Happy Police!” the women called. At an instant, five men dressed in blue suits and masks rushed in from out of nowhere to the aid of the women.

“What is troubling you, ma’am?” one the men asked.

“It is that boy! He is a demon, for he opposes the perfection of blue!”

“*gasp* It cannot be! A vile non-blue trespasser wants to corrupt our home with colors other than blue? Not on my life! Come brothers, let us destroy this child, and send him away from this sacred place!” the man said as he and his cohorts pulled out paintbrushes from behind there backs.

The men rushed at me and began to smack me around with their brushes, painting blue streaks on my face. Struggling to see through the paint, I swung my bat around wildly, connecting with a few of the insane cultists. I eventually knocked all of the cultists out my way, and started to run towards the cave that the women had previously pointed out. As I ran, I could hear the vicious shouting and footsteps of the insane cultists. I traveled through the blue-painted cave and ended up at a blue shack on a lakefront. I spotted a blue bush and quickly ducked into it to hide from the cultists.
Through the leaves, I was able to see the cultists scour the surrounding area, thankfully forgetting to check the bush I was hiding in. Eventually, the cultists gave up their search and headed back through the cave; that was, all except for one, who stayed back to guard the mysterious shack. Knowing that I could handle just one of the cultists, I picked up a decently-sized rock sitting beside of my bush and threw it at the man, hitting his skull with an audible *thunk*. I emerged from my bush and checked the guy’s body; he was still breathing, so I left him alone. Before I entered the shack, I took a moment to wash the blue paint off of my face using the lake water. I then turned to look at the door of the blue shack. Not knowing if the inside was also guarded, I equipped my bat and slowly entered the building.

Inside of the shack, I found out that it was not guarded. In fact, there was almost no one in it at all, except for a girl, sitting inside of metallic cage, weeping. I gently walked over to the cage and tapped it with my bat, making the girl look up at me. The girl had beautiful sky blue eyes, which were flooded with tears, and lovely blonde hair with a ribbon tied through it; the girl also had on a pink dress and a pair of red sneakers.

“W-w-who are you? *sniff* Are you another friend of the Happy-Happyists?” the girl asked as she wiped her eyes, allowing her to more clearly examine me. “Wait a minute... red cap... blue and yellow striped shirt... could it be? Are you... Ness?” the girl asked, hope returning to her face.

“Why, yes, I am Ness. I heard you call out to me in a dream, asking me for help. In order to find you, I had to enlist the help of the thief Everdred and the inventor Apple Kid. I don’t what the deal is with these freaky blue cultists, but no matter what, I will get you out of here,” I said encouragingly. The girl stood up and picked up a teddy bear that was lying beside her, twirling it around in her arms.
“Oh yes! Yes! I knew he would come, I just knew! I’m gonna be free again!” the girl cried as she dizzily slowed to a halt. “Ahem! Anyway, although you know my name, I feel like its only proper to have a more personal introduction. My name’s Paula Polestar; I’m 14-years-old and love teddy bears, rocking tunes, and all things pink!” Paula said happily.

“My turn! My name is Ness, no last name included; I’m 13-years-old and I love baseball, steak, and yo-yos of all types!” I said, giving a welcoming thumbs up. “Now, with the introductions out of the way, how am I going to break you out of here?” I asked.

“Unfortunately, this cage seems to be too strong to be destroyed. Trust me, I’ve tried. Instead, you need to have a key in order to unlock the cage. The last person I saw with the key was Mr. Carpainter, the archbishop of the Happy-Happyists. From what I’ve gathered, Carpainter appears to possess incredible strength and the ability to control lightning. Thankfully, I have something that should help with that lightning problem.” Paula pulled out a shiny badge from her dress pocket. “This is the Franklin Badge; a badge passed down through my family for generations. My mother says that it was used by Benjamin Franklin during his experiments with electricity, which is how it got its name. If you wear this badge, you shouldn’t have to worry about Carpainter’s lightning attacks,” Paula said as she handed me the trinket. I took it and hooked the pin through my shirt.

“Thanks! Now that I know what to do, I’m going to go confront Carpainter. I hope you don’t mind waiting a little longer,” I said, trying to be funny.

“It’s okay, I don’t mind. Just, be careful, please. I wasn’t kidding when I said that you were my only hope. Farewell for now Ness, I’ll see ya soon! Go out there and kick butt just like I know you can!” Paula said optimistically. With the Franklin Badge in hand, I stepped out of the shack and closed the door behind me...
...only to be greeted by the face that haunts my nightmares. Pokey Minch.

“Hey there Ness! It’s been awhile since I last saw you! While you were off doing whatever useless things you do, I have now become the second most important person in Happy-Happyism; second only to glorious Master Carpainter,” Pokey said with a devious smile. Pokey was wearing a blue robe over his normal clothes, supposedly to show his “importance.” The blue piglet was accompanied by two of the Happy Police that were chasing me earlier. “As for you, you’re now public enemy #1 for Happy-Happyism. Figures you would be foolish enough to conform to the evils of anti-blue. Heh heh heh. Well, if you don’t mind me, I have more urgent matters to attend to. What? No, I’m not going to fight you, I don’t want to get my robe filthy with your non-blue germs. Instead, these two are gonna deal with you. Later potater!” Pokey said as he bolted from the scene.

The two insane cultists cried out some inexplicable gibberish and rushed at me with paintbrushes outstretched. Not wanting to get another blue bathing, I dodged out of the cultists’ way and took down one of them with a bat strike to the head. The other cultist became enraged and charged at me, moving in zig-zag pattern to try and confuse me. This didn’t work for the blue baddie as he ran face first into my swing, knocking him out cold. With my enemies dispatched, I snuck back through the cave to Happy-Happy Village and asked a stranger with long black hair who was staring off into space where I could find the one they referred to as Carpainter.

“Whaaaaaaat... You wish to see Master Carpainterrrrrrr...? He should be in the main chapel, praying to the holy statue that knows allllllll... It was the thing that told Master Carpainter about the perfection of blueeee,” the stranger revealed, still gazing at nothing in particular. I thanked the man and headed over to a large blue cathedral occupying the middle of the town. The building casted an eerie shadow over most of the town, as if to symbolize its control over
the townspeople. I approached the beautifully crafted front door and entered the chapel.

The interior of the chapel was of course entirely blue, but that was not caught my attention. Instead, it was the massive amount of people that were residing in the grand hall, all wearing the strange blue suits and masks I had seen before. Most of them appeared to be in a prayer-like state, with their eyes closed and hands in the air, as if they were reaching for something on a high shelf. Thankfully none of the cultists seemed to notice me come in, so I carefully maneuvered my way around the clusters of worshipers, all while hearing incredibly strange things murmured by the groups.

“Blue, blue blue. Take away from this mortal realm and let me embrace the holy land of blue.”

“Blue, blue blue. Please cleanse this world of the evil of non-blue. Blue blue.”

“Blue, blue blue. Please, o holy blue, make me a delicious blue sandwich, with blue lettuce, blue tomatoes, blue pickles, blue pancakes, blue peanut-cheese…”

“Green, green green. Wait, no, that’s not it. I’m still new at this.”

After passing through the gargantuan hall, I came to a door and passed through it into a room with a spiral staircase. I stepped up the stairs and entered a tall room illuminated by a massive blue stain-glass window. The room was otherwise empty, save for an altar and a man kneeling before a great golden statue; to my horror, I soon realized that this statue was the same one that Lier X. Aggerate had shown me the previous morning. After chanting something that I could not understand, the man stood up and turned to face me. He wore a blue suit, different in design from the other cultists’, blue spectacles, and had blue hair similar to that of a clown; he was also holding a paintbrush, larger than those carried by the Happy police.
“Ah, salutations my friend. My subordinates refer to me as Carpainter. Have you come to assist me in my conquest to spread the perfection of blue to the entire world?” the man asked with a sinister grin.

“W-what? No, I have not come to help you; in fact, I’ve come to take you and your horde of mindless cronies down! I know what you are Carpainter; I’ve seen the heinousness of you and your people, and it must go on no longer!” I yelled, thinking of Paula’s kidnapping.

“Oh, if you don’t want to be want be my right-hand man, my left hand would be just as good. Huck hahaha! I’m just joking, of course. The holy statue that stands behind me foresaw your arrival, and described the trouble you would cause for my religion and I. You are nothing but a miserable scoundrel, and your very existence is a nuisance. I’ve tried to convince your friend little miss Paula to join me in combat against your heinousness, but she refused. Oh well, I’ll just hypnotise her into doing my bidding later. For now, I’m going to the world a huge favor and kindly end your life. Come at me you devil, and in the name of blue, I will send you straight to Hel-, *cough*, Heck.”

Carpainter jumped off of the altar and twirled his paintbrush in his hand, trying to frighten me. But I was not afraid; no, as long as Paula was still behind bars, nothing was able to strike fear into my heart. I reared back and pulled out my bat, preparing for the battle at hand.

**Master Carpainter**
**Crazed Cult Leader**

Carpainter ran towards me, swinging his paintbrush wildly, flinging blue paint all over the room. I attempted to intercept his assault with my bat, but he dodged swiftly and kicked me in my knee. I fell to the ground and felt the strikes of Carpainter’s brush on my face, blue paint smearing all over. I swung my bat and hit one of Carpainter’s shins, knocking him over. I got on my feet and tried to hit Carpainter
in the face, but he blocked my blow with his paintbrush. Carpainter rolled away and jumped up, taking out a tube of blue paint from his pocket and squirting it at me. I got soaked in the blue stream and was blinded by the paint; I then once again felt Carpainter smack me around with his brush, only this time more violently. In pain and unable to see anything but the color blue, I used PK Rockin’ α in hopes that it would get Carpainter away from me. The blast hit Carpainter in the face and sent him flying into the wall, making him drop his paintbrush. I rushed over to the brush and picked it up before hurling out of the one of the many windows in the room, leaving a large hole in the bright blue stain glass.

“Noooooooooo! Not my brush! And that window, IT WAS VERY EXPENSIVE! One does not simply defile a sacred place like this and get away with it!” Carpainter said as he flipped onto his feet. “Now child, witness the true power of the almighty color blue!” Carpainter said as he threw his hands toward the ceiling. All of a sudden, dark clouds formed over Carpainter’s head as he mumbled some cryptic nonsense. “Pray for mercy little boy! As said by Lord Giygas in Genocide 1:3, ‘Let there be lightning!’” At Carpainter’s command, the stormclouds shot out an intense burst of lightning aimed directly at me. I covered my eyes and ears, thinking that I was going to be toasted; however, the lightning struck the Franklin Badge on my chest and was reflected back at Carpainter, blackening him and making him fall backwards onto the blue carpet. I took a deep breath and wiped some paint off of my forehead. A minute after Carpainter was hit by the lightning, he let out a soft moan and slowly sat up.

“W-w-where am I? I-is the nightmare over? Have I been freed from the grasp of that horrible statue?” Carpainter said as he looked around the room. He eventually spotted me and ran towards me, grasping me in a big hug. “Oh thank you, you wonderous young man! You have saved me from the corruption of that horrible statue!” Carpainter said as he pointed to the glittering monstrosity.
“Huh? W-what? You were under the control of that statue?” I asked, barely able to breathe through Carpainter’s gratitude. Seeing that I was being choked, he released me and took a deep breath.

“Yes, yes, it is true. That evil statue had been filling my head with despicable thoughts and deceptive illusions. You see, I am the mayor of this peaceful little village, and I had recently traveled to Onett to find something nice to be the symbol of our town. I was offered this bust by a man that smelled like garlic, and thinking that it would be perfect to represent our village, I bought it from him for a killer price.

On my way home, the statue began to speak to me, and it tricked me into thinking that the color blue was all-powerful. The statue then commanded me to brainwash all of the village’s residents into believing this lie using its powers of hypnotism; the evil statue also told me to kidnap a girl named Paula and bring her here to be made into a high priestess, and said that a boy named Ness was coming to destroy my village and I. Although deep down I knew the monster was lying, an unexplainable force prevented me from going against its will, and I was compelled to do these evil things. Oh, please forgive me, I promise that it was all the statue’s fault. I just wanted to live a normal life; I never wanted anything like this to happen. I know that you came here seeking the key to Paula’s cage, so here, take it! It’s the only way I can make up for all the awful things I’ve done,” Carpainter said as he handed me a huge, rusty key.

“It’s alright, Mr. Carpainter. I understand that you were being forced to do those nasty things by that despicable statue. Now that you’ve been snapped back to reality, things should start seeming normal around here; although, I would highly recommend that you remove all of the blue paint from everything,” I said.

“Oh, I definitely will. It’s at the top of my list. But for now, I think I should dispose of this stupid statue, for it has caused much more trouble than it was worth. Go now Ness, go and free Paula from her prison. Together, you two should be able to conquer many obstacles that you could not by yourselves.” Carpainter walked over to the
demonic chunk of gold and heaved it onto his back before heading down the staircase, with myself following behind him.

The grand hall, which was previously filled to the brim with cultists, was now almost completely empty, save for myself, Carpainter, and a few leftover cultists. The remaining cultists had taken off their masks and were walking about dizzily. When they saw Carpainter carrying the statue, they all rushed over to help him haul it out of the building. As I emerged from the spooky chapel, I saw a large crowd of people gathered in front of the building, asking for answers to the recent happenings. Mr. Carpainter put the horrible idol down and addressed the people of Happy-Happy village, telling them about the statue’s corruption and about how I broke the trance that had been put over them. When Carpainter finished, the people all turned to me and cheered, crying out my name in celebration. Although their praise was nice, all I really cared about at the moment was freeing Paula from her prison. After the crowd dispersed to go rid the village of blue paint, I jogged through the cave that led to the lakefront and washed myself off with lakewater before entering the hideous blue shack. Paula was sitting on the floor twiddling her thumbs, but shot up in excitement when I came through the door.

“Ness! Did you get it? Did you defeat Carpainter and get the key?” Paula asked, swinging her teddy bear around in her arms. I pulled out the key given to me by Carpainter as the answer to her question. Without wasting another second, I stuck the key into the keyhole of the cell and unlocked the cage. Paula leapt out from behind the bars and tackled me with a powerful hug. It was only at this moment that I realized that Paula was a few inches taller than myself, with her hair ribbon making her seem even larger.

“Oh Ness, I don’t know what I would’ve done if you hadn’t heard my call. I guess I would’ve been brainwashed by Carpainter into believing in his ridiculous religion, but I have no idea how it would have gone
from there. It’s just, I don’t think I would have ever seen my family or friends ever again. *sniff* I thank you with all my heart Ness...” Paula said with tears in her eyes.

“Hey, it’s ok. Don’t cry. Big girls don’t cry. In the end, justice prevailed, right? Don’t worry, from now on, you’ll be traveling with me, and I swear, I will protect you,” I said with a smile. Paula let me go and wiped her eyes.

“You’re right Ness, big girls don’t cry. I’m not worried anymore either, because with the two of us roving together, we’ll be able to conquer many obstacles, both big and small. And for the hurdles that we can’t leap over, we will be able to jump them eventually, as we will meet two more friends to accompany on our adventure. Now, let’s not waste anymore time mulling over the past, ‘cause we have some Sanctuary Melodies to collect!” Paula said enthusiastically.

“W-what? How do you know about the Sanctuary Melodies? I didn’t even tell you about them yet,” I said, confused.

“Tee hee, you’re right, you didn’t tell me about them. I was told about them in a dream that I had a few days ago; in the dream, a deep voice told me that I was destined to travel with a boy named Ness to collect the eight Sanctuary Melodies in order to stop a great evil from destroying the world. Because of this, I refused to leave my room so that I would be ready to meet you when you came to Twoson, but I ended up getting kidnapped by the Happy-Happyists, and that’s how we ended up here. But that’s not important right now; what’s important is getting the lead out of our shoes and hitting the road.” Paula pushed me out of her way and kicked open the door to the shack. “Oh, and don’t think that I’m just a defenseless little princess that will sit there and cry while you do all of the fighting; no, if there’s any sort of action going on, I’m gonna be a part of it, no matter what. I can definitely put up a fight, for I have some psychic powers that will make mincemeat out any enemy we come across. Just remember that it’s not my fault if you get caught in the crossfire,” Paula said with a sassy face. She turned and marched out of the
cabin while I sat there and analized her words. Brash. Expressive. Quick to resort to violence. She was amazing. Unlike Pokey, this was a companion that I was happy to go along with. When I realized that Paula had left me, I snapped out of my daydream and bolted out of the cabin to catch up with my new friend.