

The Old Clockmaker Is Dead

By: DankeDonuts

<https://www.furaffinity.net/user/dankedonuts/>

The cottage's frosted glass windows gave the gathered onlookers no answers as to the tragedy that had befallen within. The results could, however, be spied from a half-open door. Where a lifeless hand lay partially covered by an old patchwork blanket. Candle-lit fingers curled in mid-begging. Next to that, an upturned fish bowl, chipped at the lip. Its spent waters pooled in the cracks of the home's stone stoop. At the wall far to the back, a dozen or more clocks had been smashed to pieces. Every cuckoo, bell, figure, torn loose and crushed underfoot.

A dozen or more heads bowed in mournful prayer. Men women, and children -- all in their bedgowns and caps-- marking the passage of a beloved community elder. Their tear-streaked faces rose to meet the sound of cackling laughter from one end of the cobblestone street. From which two dark-jacketed poliziottos marched a small and spindly Cricket. The soot-faced being would have been perfectly anonymous, if not for the manic gleam in his eye and crooked twist to his smile. His spats were torn, his scarf thread bare, his top-hat neatly topless.

Behind them, another lawman held an umbrella with notable disgust; the handle was red-brown and stank of blood. This man stepped up onto the driver's box of a waiting wagon, high-roofed and black as the fleeing night. A single, iron-barred window in the back.

The Cricket only laughed as he was thrown into the back of the vehicle and sealed behind splintering wood doors. One man slammed down a heavy iron bar. The other stepped forth to lock the bar down. The laughter became a roar. A gloved hand shot forth from the window to throttle the lawman. It took both men to tear those murderous fingers loose.

As the poliziottos recovered their dignity, the killer pressed his black-eyed face to the bars and eyed the witnesses one by one. Huddled together, they backed away as one.

"A little wooden boy made me do it!" His laughter clawed into the night air, battered back down by the hoofbeats of the two horses tasked to tromp him off to his fate. "Little wooden boy! Little wooden boy! Aaaahahahahahahahaha!"