

## The Gates of Guinee

"Come on, come on...this has to be enough." Bryan said to himself as he looked at the seven bottles of rum and offerings in the bag he was holding.

This was his only chance to see his fiancée, Tracy, again. Ever since her tragic death, Bryan was trying to do anything he could to find ways to be with her.

It wasn't until last week when he heard about the Seven Gates in New Orleans' French Quarter, which was said to be a link between the living and dead worlds. It sounded like the perfect opportunity to see her once more.

He pulled out the map and gazed at the stars that marked the graveyards on the Canal Street and Basin Street.

"Alright, first stop, Saint Louis Cemetery Number one..." Bryan said, racing to the cemetery.

He looked at his map and walked inside as he found the first location, the Tomb of Marie Laveau. Bryan took a deep breath and left a bottle of rum as well as an offering to the first guardian.

"Where to next?" he asked himself while checking the map.

Next was the second Saint Louis Cemetery where Bryan left the second rum and offering. He repeated the process several more times until he reached the final gate and took a deep breath. This was it, the point of no return...

Bryan went to the tree where the last gate was located and placed his rum and offering on the ground in front of it, saying to himself, "Please work...please work."

Suddenly, the area grew cold and dark as Bryan jumped in fear upon seeing a shadow on the ground from beside the tree. The figure stepped out, revealing himself to be a man with red eyes in an undertaker's outfit.

"So, you're the mortal who went through the gateways. My brothers and I have been watching you," the demon said. "Now, what is it that you seek?"

"You're Baron Samedi, the seventh and final guardian..." Bryan said.

"Yes, I am."

"Baron, I'm looking to see Tracy, my fiancée, again. She died last year and all I want is just to talk to her."

Baron Samedi smirked at this and said, "I shall fulfill your request, but you must understand that there is a sacrifice to be made."

"Like what?" Bryan asked.

"You must give up your own soul and join the spirit world."

Bryan gasped and moved away from the demon. This wasn't what he wanted at all!

"No... they didn't mention that at all! This isn't what I asked for!"

The demon shook his head in amusement. Oh, how naive mortals could be to someone like himself...

"I take you are familiar with the saying be careful what you wish for, yes?" he asked.

Bryan nodded and said, "Yeah, I do, but if it wasn't mentioned--"

Baron Samedi held his hand up to get the pathetic mortal to stop rambling.

"Silence. You were blinded by your own ambition and thus, this is your punishment for listening to the rest of the mortals who do not know what they are doing when it comes to breaking the seal to the land of the dead."

*I went through all those gates, all those bottles of rum and offerings, for nothing?* Bryan thought.

Before he could say anything, spirits suddenly grabbed him and dragged him under the tree. The demon smirked and disappeared, pleased that another mortal soul has joined the Land of the Dead...