

Louise the Shade - World Collection 2023

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Louise the Shade - World Collection 2023

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About this collection

Louise the Shade (as it is currently titled) is a sci-fi/fantasy world where the amount of corruption is just as high as the number of numerous assassins with more paying customers than they can take. It features the assassin called Shade, who loses her memories when a job goes wrong and, in her quest for recovering who she was, she gets tangled up into something far bigger than Shade ever would have gotten involved in, no matter who would have paid what.

Just like Shade's memories, the timeline is currently fractured and looks like this:

1. The first stories set before Shade loses her memories (might be used as flashbacks once the timeline is fleshed out more)
2. The beginning: *Shade of Protective Magic*
3. Other stories until *A Bad New Start*
4. A massive gap
5. *Bombing Hooligans*
6. A gap
7. *Among Strings of Manipulation*
8. A gap
9. *Searching for Memories* and the stories following it
10. The rest of the storyline

Life and Dagger

Currently uncollected

Shade knew how to deal with life — especially life that was trying not to get snuffed out when it was supposed to be.

Her dagger glistened with poison. That would get the job done in case something went wrong.

Silent as a predator in the night, she crept closer.

Today would be another payday.

Bad Contract

Collected in [*Hunting Inklings*](#)

Shade stared at the words in front of her. The contract was full of holes filled with clauses in small print at the edges of the paper.

For them to think that she did not notice their treachery was an insult to her intelligence. Such tricks would work on the common folk, but never Shade — or any other assassin worth their pay.

They would pay for their insults, Shade decided and crumbled the paper. It was time to get rid of some now frightened liabilities.

Liabilities who knew who she was could not be allowed to stay alive.

A Delicious Dish

Collected in [The Journey's End](#)

[Prose-ject 2020](#) day 21. Prompt: *a delicious dish*.

Shade looked at the dish in front of her. It was the most lavish one she had seen in ages; most of her employers did not invite her for dinner, let alone show off their wealth with it when they did. It was clear that this fidgety man was doing his best to show that he was capable of paying the vast sum of money that this hire would cost him.

It was pathetic. Shade knew that no one who could not afford her could reach her; she knew who had the money to pay a hitman, and she knew exactly who had the money to pay a hitman of her level.

However, she did not complain. Instead, she dug in and tasted the fish. Lavish or not, it was surprisingly delicious for what the rich buffoons considered gourmet. Usually, even after years of eating food that prioritized her health above her taste and thus tasted of flour, nothing or cardboard, the expensive gourmet she was served tasted like garbage.

The delicious food did not make the man fidget any less, though. It was clear that he had little idea what he was doing and all the idea of who he was sharing his dinner table with. Shade did not express her emotions about it — it would have been unprofessional. No, dealing with this situation with grace and disinterest would be the best way to deal with any customer in her field, especially since she was less likely to be memorable that way.

Being tasteless like her normal food was being the most invisible in plain sight.

Shade of Protective Magic

Collected in [*The One With Delirium*](#)

Challenge: Combine genres from two lists (Retro-futuristic, Western, Post-apocalyptic, Techno-thriller, Sword & Sorcery and Tragicomedy, Gothic Romance, Slice of Life, Fairy Tale, Satire) and write a story with a non-linear narrative with them.

In the dark room, Shade took the money.

"Make sure you finish this thing in time, or else," her employer growled.

"Don't worry," Shade said. "If I fail, there's nothing left of me to kill for you. Your target's spells have obliterated people before me. But my spells shall end him. That's what you're paying for. But if I die... You won't get your money back." Shade faded away from the sight, having activated her silent invisibility spell.

The alley was dark. Shade knew where she was going. This was where she was supposed to meet her employer.

"I don't know what happened to me", Shade whispered. She saw her blood-soaked dress, trying to remember what had happened before she had woken up in the sanatorium. She felt only pain despite of the pain-killing magic. "My name is Louise. I don't know what happened." She felt strong magic around herself, but she did not know where it originated.

Shade gurgled. She was choking in her blood. Her protective spells had saved her from obliteration, but this was worse than that. She would die slowly now. Her protective pendant

was cracked and magic was leaking out of it. The horrible thing reached for it. In a white flash the magic broke out, trying to protect its mistress.

Dreams of A Mirror Slab

Collected in [*The Journey's End*](#)

[Prose-ject 2020](#) day 13. Prompt: [[EVERYDAYS 241 / MAY FLOWERS](#)] by [LeJitLeJit](#).

The first nights she spent at the sanatorium, Louise dreamed of a shattered mirror slab held together with magic. She did not recognize the flower field it was at — of course she did not, she had amnesia — but something in it seemed familiar.

She must have been there at some point in her life. She was sure of it. However, with nothing to indicate where that field could be, it did not help her recover a bit of her memories or information about who she was and where she was.

As the nights went on and the dreams of that slab faded away, Louise grew more desperate, thirstier for answers. Yet all the answers were out of her reach, either locked away in her head or impossible to connect to her with the lack of information. The sanatorium staff knew nothing of her; she had merely been transferred there from a hospital without a paper trail to follow — a common practice, apparently, for people who were deemed too sick to recover to the point of returning to normal life. The sanatorium, located deep in the countryside, was meant to be a place where people were sent to die peacefully.

Louise could not help feeling that someone wanted her either to disappear to be hidden from someone or something. It was frustrating nevertheless, and she yearned

for an escape from the closed facility. She did not want to be one of those who were nursed till death, hidden from the world around the sanatorium.

Whatever it would take, Louise swore to escape and find out who she was.

Fearless Cardinal

Collected in [The Journey's End](#)

[Prose-ject 2020](#) day 3. Prompt: [Angelic Cardinal](#) by RHCheng.

Louise looked at the Cardinal bird flying around her. It evoked vague feelings in her, but she could not put a finger on what she actually felt. She could not even put a finger on what in that bird evoked those feelings; was it the colors, the species or the way it circled around her fearlessly? She could not tell.

Perhaps it was all of them. Perhaps Cardinals like that lived wherever she was from. Perhaps the fearlessness was something she could relate to. Actually, she did feel fearless; she was concerned about her amnesia and how she had ended up in the sanatorium with nothing but her name, a bloodied dress and a cracked pendant, yes, but she was not *afraid*. When the pain had disappeared and she had gotten clean robes to dress herself in, she had lost every sliver that even resembled fear. When she had gotten outside, she had even gotten curious about the environment around herself unlike most other patients.

Once she had gotten accustomed to her lack of memories, she had started to look into her pendant more. The magic she had felt around herself was definitely coming from it; the gemstone was clearly imbued with powerful magic, although due to the crack it was now leaking out. She must have been in a significant role in the society, but why had no one come to her then? Had those who had viewed her as

significant all died in whatever had almost killed her? She had absolutely no idea, and the staff of the sanatorium refused to tell her anything unnecessary about the outside world.

The answers were out there somewhere. Louise was sure of that. She only had to escape the sanatorium somehow.

Someday, she would make it out and find out who she was.

A Bad New Start

Collected in [The Journey's End](#)

[Prose-ject 2020](#) day 10. Prompt: *an unwanted surprise.*

Louise had found that searching for information on her past self was far more difficult than expected. She had apparently been transferred from one medical establishment to another multiple times during the time she had been unconscious until she had woken up at the sanatorium, which meant that she was far from home. The lack of foundation for the searches did not help either; she did not know her last name or any other identifying information, so it was impossible to find the Louise whom she was from the civil registry.

In all honesty, the fact that she had no idea where she even came from or where she had been was the biggest hindrance. She could literally be from anywhere.

Once she figured that it was no use, she decided that it was for the best to just pick a destination, head there and start from a clean table. Whoever she had been was gone, erased with her memories. She had to pick a last name for herself and rebuild her life from scratch.

She picked the capital as her destination and set forth, barefoot and ready to see what she would find. It would take a lot of work to get back up on her feet, but she was ready to do whatever it took to recover.

The cruel truths of life in the capital became apparent to her within days of arriving there. After introducing herself as Louise at a few spots, she found herself with an unwanted surprise: a mob knocking her out and capturing her.

As she waited in the dark, the magic pendant still hidden under her clothes, she could not help thinking about what unpleasant things her capturers would do to her.

Bombing Hooligans

Collected in [*Hunting Inklings*](#)

The hooligan gang was hollering below, completely unaware that their usual hanging spot was full of bombs. Louise smirked in delight; if she managed to get this mission done, she was one step closer to recovering who she had been prior to her amnesia.

The fire that ensued lighted up her hope and her past.

Among Strings of Manipulation

Collected in [The Journey's End](#)

[Prose-ject 2020](#) day 22. Prompt: *hidden strings of manipulation.*

Even though she lacked her memories of her previous life, Louise still knew how to spot the hidden strings of manipulation when she saw them.

However, she did not know how to deal with them — especially when they were all over her and pushing her to different places to do different things. As she got deeper into the mess that her life now was, she could not help but wonder whether or not going to the capital had been a bad idea. On the other hand, she was regaining information on who she had been but then again, she was getting into dangerous situations she no longer had the skills for. It was tough to reclaim those skills even when she was getting retrained by the best.

Why she was so important, she had no idea, but she already knew that the rich in the city had plans for her and she was getting manipulated into it. Now, it was too late to back down; there was no other way out than death, and Louise did not want to go that way after escaping it once already.

She had probably been far too deep in this mess the moment she had set foot inside the capital's perimeter and thus gone under the influence of the most powerful of the country.

If Louise had only seen a plausible end to this, she would not have worried, but she had no idea what was going to happen once she was ready to do whatever the rich ultimately wanted her to do.

She lied each time she said she was not afraid of it.

Searching for Memories

Collected in [Searthern Dangers](#)

Standard prompt: *You cut yourself on something, only to realize you don't bleed blood, but ink.* by [PhantomMarquis](#).
Flashback prompt: *They watch from the other side.* by [fyoot](#)
(Year 2010).

Challenge: Write a story involving a [Conveniently Interrupted Document](#) and an [Anti-Villain](#) and [lampshade](#) either of the tropes.

Let's just say that I misread the part about which tropes to lampshade, so while there is a lampshade in there, it's for a wrong trope ([Pink Is for Sissies](#)). Oops!

"No, no, please no, please don't hurt me!" the man begged.
"Give. Me. The. Codes. To the Memory Archives," Louise growled, extending her knife closer to the man's throat. She tried to ignore the cut she had gotten from the sharp edge of the table; it was not the pain that bothered her but the fact that she was bleeding ink once again, something that had probably started upon her amnesia. It was alarming but had not proven to be lethal. At least so far.

"I don't have them!" the man told.

"Then who in this shithole of bureaucracy system does if not its head?!" Louise roared.

"I-I don't know... I don't work on that level!" the man told. Louise smelled the urine; the pathetic coward had wet himself. *Pathetic*. Well, he was dressed in all pink, so what else Louise had expected on the first sight? Pink was for sissies, after all, and she had learned to use that to her advantage to make her opponents underestimate her.

"Then what level do you suggest I should go and look for the codes?" Louise growled. She already heard the security guards coming; her roaring had alerted them. She had to make her escape fast.

"I-I-I don't know," the man told, shaking.

"Do not know or don't want to tell?" Louise growled and put the knife on the man's throat. "Answer. *Now.*"

"I do not know, I swear! I'm just a figurehead!"

The guards were at the door. Louise's time was up. She slashed the man's throat to get rid of the evidence and jumped through the window from which she had come in to the office. Her new magic pendant would help her fly down to the IT level of the building. If she could break in without the codes, she could be able to recover her memories – and the keys to stop the infringement of the international memory privacy laws by her country's system.

She needed to get her memories back so that she could once again become the woman she was: Shade, the assassin for hire. As far as she had understood, her old magic pendant had saved her from death, but in the near-death she had lost her memories upon winding up to the sanatorium she had woken up from, remembering only her real name, Louise.

And all this slaughter she had laid upon her wake while looking for her memories... All of it was tied to a mission, a contract signed by her. She knew that failure and giving up were not options; they, all her employers from the years she had managed to track down, were watching her progress from the other side of the city.

It was not just her fame that depended on her success; she needed the money from this mission she had been sent on by her ex-BFF, one of the rebels fighting against the Memory

Storage System, "a precaution against people losing their memories due to amnesia", as the government called it. Otherwise she could never get the money for the bail needed to get her sisters out of the prison they had been put in by the government.

Louise landed on a window, ready to launch the dissipation magic at it. She had to be quick and she had to succeed.

This was the endgame; should she fail to get in and finish her mission tonight, she might never get a chance like this ever again.

Smashed Screens

Currently uncollected

Prompt: *Computers.*

By the time Louise made it to the computers, each and every one of them had a smashed screen. With the heavy security that had to be built into the systems, it was certain that snatching a hard drive would accomplish nothing.

The alarm was blaring. It would only be a matter of time before the guards would make it there. She had to think fast.

Then she saw it.

A flicker on one of the screens.

It was still usable.

A smile crept on Louise's face. There was still a chance to get what she came here for.

Escaping

Currently uncollected

The data was secure in the data card. Now, she only had to figure out how to get out alive.

After all, while she had waited for it to load, the whole room had been surrounded. There were helicopters outside, ready to gun her down if she went through the window. Behind the doors, there were gunners too trigger-happy to pass the law enforcement exams.

Louise was in luck, however; no one was seemed to be securing the air-conditioning ducts which were too small for most intruders — and guards — to get into to begin with.

When the gunners broke into the room, they were greeted by a proximity bomb when Louise was already far, far away.

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