

## **Listen**

By: Kimmy Trauner

I could tell you, but you wouldn't believe me.

I can pretty much guarantee it. And honestly, I can't blame you. See, I'm not like you, so you probably wouldn't even take the time to listen to me in the first place. No one ever believes people who aren't like them. It's a law of human nature. If you've never noticed that, you are extremely unobservant. I'm sorry for saying it so bluntly, but it happens wherever you go. Parents and children, popular kids and nerds...one always thinks they're better than the other. It's something that people really have to get over. Unfortunately, humans seem to have an issue with inferiority. That's part of the reason you wouldn't listen to me. My story has everything to do with it.

I know what you're thinking now. You're thinking I'm wrong, that you could suspend your disbelief long enough to hear what I have to say. I would love to agree with you, to entertain your fantasy, but I really can't. That would be lying, and my kind has always been raised to know that lying is the greatest form of treachery. When people don't believe you, see, you shouldn't do anything more to make them think you're not telling the truth. That's why I can't tell you anything. You would think I was lying.

But I'm definitely not lying. I know this is the truth. I think I should tell you, even if I've been warned not to. Those who warned me...they refused to tell. They told me that no one would listen, that I would be considered a lunatic. I wish I could prove them all wrong and show you humans that I actually do exist. You know I'm there, you *do*, but you can't make yourself admit it. You don't want to seem weak.

But you know what? I'm going to tell you anyway. Humans should know what's going on, why they are the way they are. Otherwise they'll never be able to see themselves the way everyone else does.

I guess it starts with who I am. Or what I am, depending on how you look at it. I would prefer if you thought of me as a real being, one that you would consider worthy of human communication. It would make everything so much easier. And remember, you promised to listen.

So, what am I? I suppose I'll answer you, even if it may be difficult.

I direct you. I'm your thoughts, your feelings, and your conscience. I give you life. That doesn't really answer you, though, does it? No. Well, there are lots of words for me. I'm hesitant to share them with you, because I know you'll get angry. Just remember, I'm good, I promise. I help you. You're alive because of me. The word that everyone uses makes me seem bad, but I swear it's been distorted because of how people look at me. I'm more like a spirit, really, just flitting around inside you. I do control you, but it's nothing bad, honestly. I still haven't answered your question.

What am I? Well, I'm a parasite.

See? I knew you wouldn't believe me.