

Reaper

Death appeared in the pentagram chamber. Five boys looked up at him from each point of the weathered star. A body lay cold and still in the center. One of them held a bloody knife, another a heavy tome and crackling torch to read by – the only source of light throughout the catacombs.

The young man lying on the ancient stone took a loud, shaky breath – unmistakable evidence of a soul returning from the underworld.

Death's fury rippled like poison in the air. He parted his chalky lips, air whistling through serrated teeth in a hiss.

Clad in robes of night, Death raised his gleaming scythe and the little bit of warmth in the cave was sucked away. Torchlight scored across the blade, soulless eyes flashing from his white, skull-like face.

He strode forward, the mists of Hell trailing in his wake.

He was the reaper of souls, the ferryman between worlds. No one cheated him without paying a price.

His voice cracked like thunder, "For the love of Hell and Hades, if you resurrect this punk one more time, I'll kill you all!"

The group stared at him wide-eyed for a heartbeat, then burst into laughter.

The freshly resurrected kid sat up shakily, coughing with a grin. "That makes four, right?"