

## **Kaz**

**By Lordan Brichetto**

The streets of Karma are overrun with gangs and punks of all types, but in a small, humble orphan home, the oldest resident reigns supreme over the neighborhood. His name is Kazuma a.k.a. Kaz, a scruffy 17-year-old punk who speaks to spirits. His beloved dead visit him. His parents. Beautiful Keira. So close. So far. So real. Kaz is alone, but never lonely. His family is always with him.

Kazs' sense of the supernatural began when he was very young. His first memory of the shift in his reality began after Keira, his twin sister, drowned at the age of 3. Sweet Keira loved to walk with him down to the koi pond behind their home. It was one of their favorite things to do together. They knew not to go to the pond without one of their parents, but the fish were calling out to them on that cold day, "Come to us!"

Sneaking, they went hand in hand. Always together. Twins forever together. The gates around the pond were too high for them to open on their own, except for that one time, on that one day.

Keira laughed as she leaned over the slippery rocks, trailing her little fingers in the cold water. She reached out with a piece of stale bread, trying to get the shy koi to come to the surface, but they were shy that day. The last words Kaz heard were, "Wait, Kazy! They will come. Wait!"

It happened so quickly. So quietly. Keira was gone. Kazs' last memory was black, frozen in time and space. Nothing was left of Keira except a ripple in the dark waters.

One innocent moment in time took Keira from him, but not forever. Kaz found her again where souls eternally search for their still-living loved ones. Somewhere caught between the living and the dead. Their parents were there too. Ever since that time, Kaz shifted to a new reality. One where the spirits of the dead come to the spirits of the living. The question of whether they are 'real' or not, was unknown to most, but Kaz knew they were more real than anything else in his world and welcomed eternal friends.

Keira was always welcome. Kaz sensed her spirit energy when she was near. Sometimes she came to him as a 3-year-old child, happy and smiling. Then there were times when she climbed from the dark waters dressed in her burial shroud. Her beautiful

face was covered by wet dark hair. Timeless and beautiful. All spirits have a special kind of energy. An energy that introduces them as pure or evil. Keira was both at times. Her new energy was neutral. Perhaps she has found peace with her child self and the spirit-woman she has become. Eternal and never far away. So close.