

**THE LOST ONE**

by

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Everything in her set raging, burning desire in the hearts of mortal men. Mortal eyes saw in her the first flower of Awakening or the last leaf of Withering. Her face was the closest thing to perfect this world had ever seen. There were no flaws at all except for one thing: she smiled rarely. Her expression was always dead serious or deeply ponderous and her forest-green eyes were like mirrors. Anything but never joyous. Framing her face was her slightly curled fiery-red hair which looked like living fire and was in every way in contrast with the calmness of her marble face. The hair landed all the way down halfway her back. Her body was all too perfect as well. However, most of her figure was hidden by the loose green clothes she always wore. These clothes did nothing to highlight her gorgeous features and revealed practically nothing. This outfit she had chosen by purpose; even with this outfit she gained too much attention from males and did not even want to think what effect a more daring outfit could have. The slit of her wide skirt reached quite high though but the reason for this was not to be revealing; rather it granted her legs enough freedom. His eyes however saw through all of this, through her expression, through her godlike appearance and most importantly, through her eyes.

He had seen her a few times, mostly accidentally and from a distance. Wherever she was, she was constantly ignoring any and all attempts by males to get her attention. However, today he had seen her from so close that their eyes had met for a very brief moment. She had not noticed him for some reason or another but he had had a chance to see through those mirror eyes.

The night was upon the ruins. A gentle wind was blowing still and it had spirited all the clouds away from the black sky too, revealing the infinite number of sapphire eyes of the night sky. The moon was out and full as well and the desolate landscape bathed in pale light and revealed all of its hopeless sadness to those who wished to see. Upon one of the cold stones sat a ponderous black figure. Had not the moon illuminated this figure it would have been perfectly invisible against the pitch black night. The only thing in the figure that was not black was the pale, smooth face but that face was now covered by locks of straight black hair. The face was heavenly beautiful but somehow sad and the expression on it was quite absent. A black, long- and wide-sleeved shirt

covered half of the man, a black and heavy looking leather skirt the other half. Two things were not covered by cloth though and these made the man look inhuman. This man had a pair of black wings stretched out from his back towards the sky, neatly together. Feathered wings like those of a bird or, more precisely, those of an angel. And yes, an angel this creature was but he was not the traditional angel of light. This angel was a fallen one, a dark one.

There he sat, thinking about her. His forehead rested on his palm and his sapphire-blue eyes stared at his feet. The angel knew more of her than anyone else for the single brief peek through her eyes had told him everything. She was torn by grief and desperately lonely. But she denied it at all times and never allowed herself to think of these two sacred things: her grief and her solitude. This angel, this fallen one, riddled by her denial, pondered how to awaken her. And then, after hours of intensive thinking he decided to meet her.

The wind made the forest whisper that night. She was walking through the familiar path that led through the woods. It was late but the near-full moon shining through branches of high trees lit her way. It was early Withering and only a few lonely leaves had left their trees by now. Then she heard a sound and felt a gentle current of air upon her shoulders. She turned around slowly and at the same time reached for the hilt of her sword, touching it nervously with her fingers. When she had turned around completely she saw the angel. He smiled his small little smile, which was more sad than joyful and held his hands together slightly under his chin. His eyes were looking down.

“Who are you?” she asked with a demanding, cold voice. She now gripped the hilt of her sword. She had been taught that dark angels were an ill omen. The mere sight of a dark angel sent mortals to chaotic flight. Such was their reputation: cold and cruel.

The angel lifted his head and gazed directly into her eyes. Then he spoke slowly, with a soft and melodic voice, saying these words: “My name is lost to me.”

A short silence followed. The angel's sapphire eyes were staring into the woman's forest-green eyes and she on the other hand tried to avoid eye contact. She was afraid and could not

hide her fear completely. She trembled and her grip of her sword became nervous; if she now drew the sword, she would drop it from her shaking hands. Then, after that short moment of silence she spoke again with a less certain voice: "Have you come to take my life?"

The angel looked puzzled for an instant but then widened his smile to encourage the woman, to make her understand. "You are a sad being my friend and now you are even afraid. Fear not for I wish only a brief moment to converse with you." These words he said and took four steps forward.

"Fine, then, if that gets me out of this sooner" She said, releasing the hilt of her sword from the grip of her fingers. Then she allowed their eyes to really meet for a longer while.

The angel paused for a moment, looked at her with a ponderous gaze and then uttered a single word "Why?". Then, before she could answer, he continued just in time to interrupt her first spoken syllable. "Why is your heart so sealed, and why you deny what your heart wants?"

She had never heard that question. Never. No one had ever had a chance to ask such a question. She was still afraid although the angel tried to convince her of his peaceful intentions. She started with "I..." but the words just died before coming out. She did not know the answer.

"Would you not like to see your heart liberated, free of all boundaries, and live your life the way you should?" the angel continued, with a rhythmic voice, uttering word after word in a peaceful manner.

She looked deeper into his eyes now. And then she saw herself through the angel's eyes. She saw herself in chains, and at the same time holding the chains from the other end. She saw her own prison, the one she had built. She shivered. Each word the angel had spoken had scratched the once so perfect wall she had carefully built around her heart. He was so peaceful, so fascinating and... he was so right the whole time. All her hidden, trapped feelings escaped through the first crack in the wall and burst to the surface in form of two streams of tears. Broken as she now was she searched for shelter in the angel's embrace, in his arms.

It was a long silence that followed although her quiet sobbing broke it constantly. The angel stood almost still, holding her and listening to her heartbeat through the sobbing. The task he had set upon himself was now complete but the woman could still need guidance.

Finally she had shed all the tears and lifted her head to allow their eyes to meet once again. The first rays of the morning sun were already in the horizon. She was still confused and felt more alone than ever but now she was also extremely curious. What was this creature? She would find out and thus asked with a shy voice “But why then? Why you came here to tell me this?”

The angel was not surprised by the question, he had expected from the beginning. He smiled a smile full of warmth and then spoke, again in his peaceful tone “For what you think behind that question the answer is no. The Fall forges the soul. Anger rises to surface and only few seek to put it down. Why should they anyway, most are cast out for so meaningless reasons. Their anger is rightful.” he paused for a moment to look at his glorious black wings. Those wings reminded him of the Fall. “Why then was I cast out? For the sake of loving mortals so much, all of mortals. For envying your life here on this world. They threw me out because of that. But I was not angry for I knew what would come. The Fall forged only my body and stole my white wings. The black ones you see now I grew out of sheer power of my will. And my love for mortals, it stays. I want to be like you.”

The woman looked shocked. What she had now heard was so different from what she had been taught about Heaven. She almost entered denial again but somehow she knew the angel spoke the truth, bare and plain. “But why? Is Heaven not the perfect paradise?” her voice trembled again. She was already afraid of the answer for she knew what the answer would be.

“For many it is. For me, no. The life down here fascinates me so. I wish to see the beauty of this world, and that in the souls of everyone. I wish to bring that beauty to the surface. And this is why I came to you.” After these words the angel released her from his embrace and retreated a few steps, readying his wings. With his wings spread fully he looked so glorious against the morning sun. “I will go now” he said, again with a soft voice “but we shall meet again should you wish for more guidance.”

“Then we shall meet again” she said with a firm voice and prepared to depart as well. The angel turned around and moved his wings slowly and started to rise above the ground. And soon his silhouette was gone.

They met again during the following nights and while the angel tried to convince her to find a mortal home to her heart, he finally saw himself falling in love too. Something in her was attracting the angel. Something that was inside those now crumbled walls. Something that called out and touched the angel's immortal heart with a warmth that was something he had never felt. Their first meetings were full of heavenly words and moments of silence during which they conversed with their eyes. One morning they were near a crystal watered forest pond. The sun made the water glitter much like the sapphire eyes at night but with yellow color. She was bathing in the slightly chilling water. The angel was sitting on a flat stone, looking into the woods and listening to the sounds of the awakening forest.

"Come now, why don't you join me?" She threw the question with a giggling voice from amidst the water and at the same time rose a bit above the surface, revealing most of her perfectly shaped rounded breasts. Her smile was inviting and she had a tempting look in her eyes. The way her wet red hair covered some of her skin was more than appealing.

The angel looked at her but then blushed and lowered his head in shame. Then he shook his head slowly and said nothing. He knew this day would come but he was not ready. He also knew that no mortal would have ever said no to such offering.

"Why the sudden silence?" she asked and swam closer. Her voice was more serious now as she slowly began to understand. He was not ready. She just knew. She rose from the water. Her body was covered with drops of the crystal water and they glittered in the sun. The angel did not look no matter how attractive that body would have been to mortal eyes. His eyes were not mortal. She wrapped herself into her green traveling cloak and walk slowly to the angel causing a very quiet rustle as grass bent under her feet. She lifted his head and their eyes met again. A short silence occurred and then she sat on his lap, putting her arms around his neck tenderly and pressing her cheek softly against his shoulder. The angel completed the embrace and put his arms around her, pressing her against himself gently. Not a single word was spoken for they needed none. The warmth they shared reached far beyond physical contact, all the way into heart and soul. They could feel how their souls touched each other and entwined together to form a perfect harmony, an avatar of pure love. Such purity could never be defiled. Such harmony could never be broken. Such

embrace could never be ended. They wanted to stay here forever. To have this moment become eternity.

The night fell heavily upon the ruins that evening. The angel sat on the cold stone where he always sat to ponder. His expression was dark and even that little sad smile was gone. The moon was half and shed only so little light that no one could actually have seen his expression. Dark clouds covered most of the sapphire eyes and most of the moonlight too. The whole landscape reflected the fallen one's grief. Since the fall he had so much wanted to be like mortals, to be with them. He sighed heavily. This day he had once again understood how inhuman he still was. He wept. Several pitch black tears rolled out of his eyes and down his cheek from where they finally fell to the ground forming two very little black pools that lasted only a short while. He had wanted so much to be like humans and not to be like angels. He was still a part of what he so despised; the way Heaven treats mortals, like mere puppets; those who worship are given salvation, those who do not are damned. The angelic purity had kept him away from primal lust, the passion which embodies mortal love so often. The color of his wings did not change the hypocrisy. There was still so much he needed to do if he ever wanted to be free of Heaven's chains. This was all part of the greatest of all divine punishments, the curse that comes with falling from grace.