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The Misfit's Tale

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Ruby G.



The General Prologue

This is a tale I chose to omit in the original Canterbury Tales. It is a tale most surreal and enchanting compared to all the others.

It is a story of true love, in all the sense of the word. A connection unlike any other I have ever seen. I would inquire that all the other pilgrims would have to agree with me, whether or not they would ever admit it.

The tale was told by a child, an orphan, who journeyed with three others like her—all of varying ages. The eldest was named Gabriel, a boy who in a few years time would become a man. The youngest one was an infant, she was a quiet child whom the others called Joy. A befitting name, for whenever I looked, Joy always had a smile on her face as she was cradled in the arms of one of the other children. There was also a young girl by the name of Ebony, her skin as dark as the night sky. But that was not what stood out about her. What truly stood out was the fact that her left leg was made of wood. It was longer than her fleshly leg and thus she walked with a limp. Her hair was knotted and coarse, and her face was hardened; as if it was etched from stone. Lastly, the teller of the story was a little wide-eyed girl, named Ruby. She was a gem to behold. Even through the dirt and grime on her face her beauty shone through, the only imperfection that could be seen was a burn on the back of her shoulder peaking out from her oversized clothes.

Throughout the short time I knew them, these four seemed closer than I had ever seen people so diverse to be. They were different, yet also closer than blood. They were misfits, and my oh my did they have a story to tell.



The Misfit's Prologue

Occurs after the Frankelyns Tale

“None of those stories really represent genuine love.”

The little wide eyed girl-Ruby- said after the Franklin finished his Tale.

Every eye in the camp turned towards her. A silence fell upon the group, tension so thick it could be cut with a knife.

The Wife of Bath was amused at the girl's comment, the squire was intrigued that a girl such as herself would speak up in such a way, and the Clerk, Franklin and Merchant were very offended. They glared at the little girl so harshly her brother stepped between them and her.

“Love's not just a feeling, not about one person being in complete submission while the other is in full control. And although devotion to one another can be a factor, it's not the full picture of love.” The Little Girl said, stepping back out into the open. “It's about working together, being there for one another through the good times and bad. It's about sacrifice and faith, not something as flippant as mere feelings or as selfish as control.”

“Well dear,” The Wife of Bath drawled “Why don't *you* tell us a tale of true love then, huh?”

“Please do” Our Host responded. “I would be intrigued to see what you may say.”

The Little wide-eyed Girl looked around at the eyes before her.

“Okay”

With that, she began her story.



The Misfit's Tale

Here bigynneth the Little Wide-Eyed Girl's Tale

PART ONE

There once was a powerful kingdom in a world unlike our own, surrounding the kingdom was an enchanted forest. There were stories and myths that at one time, the darkness and light resided together in perfect harmony. Faeries and sprites laughed and played alongside orcs and centaurs all day long. The creatures of the night and light were ruled by two Mighty Entities: The Spirit of Light and the Phantom of Shadows. Together, they rule the forest equally keeping life in the balance. Every five hundred years the Entities are succeeded by their heirs, and the cycle of life starts anew.

But one day, the creatures of the night became greedy, and wanted the forest to themselves. Unbeknownst to the Phantom of Shadows, when the new heir of light was born, they attacked it; for they knew, that if they were able to kill the heir, then the light would eventually one day fade out and die. The Spirit of Light was killed in the battle and the heir disappeared. The world of light and darkness were separated and the forest was weakened. Now, when dusk falls and the faeries sleep, beasts of the night emerge from the shadows, lurking amongst the trees and grounds, waiting for a creature of light to come into their midsts and give them the opportunity to dispel the light from the forest for good.

During the last days of harmony, there was a silver wolf that walked the lands of the forest. He was a unique creature of grace and nobility. He kept to himself, for he had no one like him. He was a creature of the night that looked as if he belonged in the light. He was different, special, and all the other creatures hated him for it. So he kept to himself, he was a lone wolf and although he was strong, all he ever wanted was a place to belong.

One night as he roamed the forest, he heard the sound of a crying child. Following the noise he came to see the Spirit of Light collapsed on the ground, the heir in her arms. There were various creatures of the night surrounding her.

Immediately the silver wolf pounced.

He attacked his fellow creatures of the night determined to protect the heir and the Spirit of Light no matter what, for if the light were eradicated their world would soon fall apart.

The beasts, enraged by the Silver Wolf's betrayal, attack him vigorously. However, the Silver Wolf was faster, stronger than them all, his determination and duty surpassing their bloodlust and greed. In the end, the Silver Wolf had defeated many creatures and chased away the others.

Wounded, but stable, the wolf walked towards the Spirit of Light and the heir. His bright blue eyes met the Spirit's golden ones, the light from them fading.

"Protect her..." The dying Spirit said "Protect...my little Gem." The Spirit of Light touched the wolf's face.

"She's our last hope."

A Strange sensation came over the Silver Wolf as he was encompassed in a bright white light. His body became numb and the world around him blurred. He transformed before his very own eyes from a wolf, into a teen boy. He stared in awe at his new form for but a moment, before kneeling back at the Spirit's side.

"Be her...Guardian Angel" She said with her last breath

The transformed wolf stared at the little child. "You have my word" he said.

With that the Spirit of Light's soul was whisked away to a realm unknown, in that moment, the light of the forest began to fade, and the creatures of light scattered.

The boy took the heir in his arms, she looked up at him complete trust in her eyes. Immediately he felt a connection, and he knew that he would keep this child safe.

As the world began to darken, The boy ran from the forest with the heir. Determined to stay true to his word.

Even if one day it'd cost him his life.

“What happens after that?” A small child by the name of Gemma asked. “What happened to the heir? The Phantom? The guardian? The forest?”

“Nobody knows.” Her brother, Angel answered. “The story ends there.”

“You say that every time!” Gemma said “Make up an ending!”

Angel laughed “Well, what would you want the ending to be?”

“I want the heir to grow up and together her and her protector fight to bring back peace to the forrest!”

Angel laughs as he picks little Gemma up. “Then that’s how it will end.”

PART TWO

A few years passed and Gemma grew into a beautiful, strong young girl. She would go on adventures during the day throughout the village, throughout the plains, but she never went into the forest. Her brother asked her to deter from going there for her safety, she was especially forbidden to go even near the forest when night fell. She knew her brother cared about her and wanted her to be safe while he was gone at work, but she had no greater desire than to explore the forest. She felt a connection to it. A pull she couldn't fully describe, like she belonged there. She had to go it, *needed* to go in.

And thus, one day, she did.

She wandered around, taking in the beauty of the trees and the sounds of the birds chirping. She took a deep breath of the crisp pure air, and let her imagination run wild.

She imagined herself as surrounded by creatures of light. Dancing and singing with them, Just like in the tale Angel would tell her. For hours, she let herself be free.

In her joyous frolic, Gemma had lost track of time. The sun had begun to set and the shadows of twilight had covered the land of the forest.

Realizing her mistake, Gemma quickly tried to head home, but far too quickly the darkness of the forest encased her.

Suddenly, Gemma heard the growling and screeches of monsters lurking.

They knew she was here.

She could hear them, *feel* them surrounding her. She tried to run out of the forest as fast as she could, but before she knew it, she was surrounded, pinned against a tree.

Although fear pounded in her heart, she stood tall, facing her death with her head held high, as Angel had always taught her.

She closed her eyes

'Im sorry Angel'

Within the next moment, a shadowy fog suddenly flew in, destroying every monster in its wake. Gemma watched in shock as every creature was encased in fatal shadows.

Moonlight shone through the leaves of the trees, illuminating the fog as it floated in the midst of the where the monsters once were. Gemma stood still, waiting to see what it would do.

The fog slowly came towards her, cautiously. Although her heart was pounding, she could somehow sense it meant her no harm.

Gemma began to walk towards it, curiously. As she did so, she could have sworn she caught a glimpse of a face forming in the midst of the shadows.

“Gemma!” A loud voice came from behind her.

Gemma watches as the shadowy being disappears just as Angel came running towards her.

“My word Gemma are you alright?!” Angel frantically asked, looking all over for any injuries on her. “Are you hurt??”

Gemma shook her head “I’m okay Angel, really.”

Angel’s fear then turned to anger. “I told you to stay away from these woods! Do you realize how late it is?? You could have been killed!”

Gemma looked down at the ground, ashamed. “I know...I’m sorry”

Angel was quiet for a moment, then sighed. “I’m sorry too for shouting, I was just so worried...” He pulled his little sister into a tight hug. “I thought I lost you.”

Gemma had given her word not to return to the forest, but as the days and weeks passed, the shadowy figure would not leave her mind. Gemma knew it meant her no harm. It had saved her, and she felt a strange connection to it. A connection similar to the one she felt towards the forest itself. She knew she had to face it again.

So, one day when Angel was away, Gemma returned to the forrest in search for the shadowy figure. She knew the dangers that awaited her, but she didn’t let that stop her.

To her surprise she didn’t see nor hear one monster as she ventured deeper into the forest. As she continued walking, searching, a grey mist began to pool around her along the ground, and Gemma had the feeling that she wasn’t alone. She knew the strange entity was there.

“I know you won’t hurt me.” Gemma said “If you wanted to you would’ve last time.” She looked around “I just wanna talk. I just wanna say thank you.”

The mist and shadows grew darker and larger, it began to converge on itself and transformed into a boy. Seeming to be a year or two older than Gemma.

Gemma stared at the mysterious being before her. The shadowy substance emanates off of him while in this physical form. His skin was as pale as moonlight, and his eyes as dark as the night.

“What are you?” Gemma asked him

The boy stared at her, watchful. “I am...a shadow being, a creature of the night.”

Gemma looked at him carefully. “If you are a creature of the night. Why save me? Why not attack me like the others?”

“Not all creatures of the night are like that. Being one doesn’t make you inherently bad.”

“Are there more creatures like you? Shadow beings?”

He shook his head. “It’s just me. I’m the only being who can change their form at will-shadow wise or not.” He looked down at the ground, breaking eye contact for the first time. “It gets a little lonely sometimes.”

Gemma softly smiled and took a step towards him. “Maybe I can help with that.”

Gemma spent the day with the shadowy boy, they had a lot in common. yet they were different at the same time. It was something she had never had before, someone who seemed to truly understand her.

“You haven’t told me your name.” Gemma said as they sat along the Lake.

“...Nox” The boy replied.

Gemma smiled. “Nice to meet you Nox, My name is Gemma.”

For the next several months, Gemma would go to the forest whenever she could. Even with all the dangers around them, Gemma felt safe with when she was with Nox.

“There’s this myth,” Gemma begun as her and Nox walked. “That darkness and light use to live in harmony in an enchanted forest ruled by two Entities until creatures of the night turned against them. Is it true? Is this the forest that the myth speaks about?”

Nox nodded solemnly. “It is no myth. Those events happened exactly as you were told. The creatures of the night who attacked the Spirit of light were transformed into what are called the Corrupted, unable to step foot anywhere where there is presence of light, lest they die. Not all creatures of the night turned against the entities, but many creatures of light have become afraid of them all. Many dare not roam these woods any more, even during the day. This is why the forest is always so quiet. There was once a time when laughter and bright sounds flooded the trees, I wonder if there will ever come a day where it will be like that again.”

“What happened to the Phantom of Shadows? Was there nothing they could do?”

Nox lowered his head. “The Corrupted did not just go after the entity of Light, but of Shadows as well. They knew he would never stand for this, so they plotted against him too. The only entity they planned to keep alive was the Shadows heir.”

“And that heir is you, isn’t it Nox?” Gemma inquired “That’s why they’ve stopped attacking me. You forbade them to.”

The smallest of sad smiles formed on his shadowy face. “You’re very perceptive Gemma. That’s one of the many things I like about you.”

Gemma couldn’t help but smile at his comment, pulling a stray hair behind her ear.

“You’re special Gemma.” Nox continued “You make me feel normal, human. Spending time with you these last few months have made me feel more alive than I have in a long time. When you’re around I feel...”

He reached his hand towards her. “...Complete”

Gemma, feeling the same way towards him, reached out to take his hand. The moment their hands touched, a burst of shadow and light energy expelled outward from between them, knocking them both to the ground.

As she recovered she looked over at Nox to see if he was alright, wondering what had just happened.

Nox sat a few feet away eyes wide as he stared at her. “It’s you...”

Gemma looked down at her hands and saw a faint white glow emanating off of them. She looked up and saw the essence of shadow and light mingling together around her and Nox. Just as she realized what this meant, the world around them began to darken and sounds of growls and screeching came from nearby, getting closer with every moment.

“You need to get out of here. They know who you are now, and they’ll stop at nothing to kill you.” Nox said

“But what about you?” Gemma asked frantically

“Don’t worry about me, just get to safety.”

“Nox-”

A Corrupted appeared from the bushes, running full speed towards Gemma. Nox uses his shadows to knock it away. The others are coming fast.

“Gemma go! Please!”

Still processing what all has happened, Gemma fled from the forest.

As Gemma ran through the door to her house, she finds Angel inside, just returning home from work.

“There you are.” Angel said “I was wondering where you were.”

“I’m the missing Heir of Light.” Gemma said curtly “Aren’t I, Angel?”

Angel was silent as she stared at her. The look in his eyes said it all. “You’ve been going to the forest, haven’t you?”

“The story you told me as a child wasn’t a story at all. It was true, and I’m the heir of light.”

Angel remained silent, his eyes focused on the ground.

“Answer me Angel!” Gemma screamed, her voice cracking.

“Yes” Angel said softly “You are the missing heir.”

There was a silence in the room for a long moment. “Which also means I’m not your little sister.”

Angel looked up at her at that moment. “Gemma...” He said stepping towards her.

Gemma took a step back “I’ve never meant anything to you have I?” Tears steamed down her face as she looked up at him, heartache in her eyes.

“I’m just an obligation.”

Angel immediately knelt down in front of her and cupped her face in his hands. “You are not an obligation. You are my whole world. For all these years I’ve laughed with you, cried with you, and I’ve watched you grow up into the beautiful, caring, adventurous girl that you are. We may not be blood, but you are my family. You mean everything to me.” Angel wiped her tears away with his thumbs. “I protect you because I love you Gemma, not because I was told to.”

Gemma wrapped her arms around Angels neck and hugged him tightly. “I love you too.”

Angel held her tightly in his arms, rubbing her back as she cried.

“The forest is dying, Angel.” Gemma said as she calmed down. “I’m the only one who can save it.”

“You’re right” Angel said. “It’s time to take you home little Gem.”

P A R T T H R E E

Gemma explained to Angel everything that has happened in the last few months as they went to the forest. When they reached their destination, Angel and Gemma could both feel the life of the forest fading away with every moment. Gemma’s skin glowed a faint white light, her suppressed powers awakened from her contact with Nox. Angel stared at her and softly smiled, before transforming into a silver wolf, a form he can better protect her in here in the forest.

They ran through the Forest, in search of Nox. The light of Gemma’s power attracted the dark monsters. Angel stepped in front of her protectively, growling. As the Monsters drew closer, Nox’s shadow flew in repelling the Corrupted and keeping them at bay.

“Are you alright?” He asked as he reformed into his human form. Fresh cuts and bruises covered his body.

“I’m okay. What about you?” Gemma asked concerned

“The Corrupted attacked me. They will do anything to kill you, even if it means killing the forest in the process.

Nox looked down at Angel. “You were her guardian?” He asked

Angel nodded.

“Thank you, for keeping her safe.” Nox said to him.

“Come” He said to them. “We have to get to the center of the forest. It’s where the last essence of light in this forest resides. If you pass through it Gemma, your powers should fully return, and together we can bring life back to this forest.”

Gemma nodded and all three of them ran to the center of the forest. Fighting off several monsters who crossed their path along the way.

Eventually, the trio finally made it to the center, Nox ran ahead. The last essence of light was just a few feet away, when a Corrupted wolf came out of the bushes and lunged at Gemma.

Gemma had no time to react. She watched in horror as the wolf closed in, its teeth barred. Just before the wolf landed the killing blow, Angel jumped in front of Gemma, the wolf's jaws sinking its teeth into his neck, instead of hers.

“Angel! No!” Gemma screeched

Nox quickly used his shadows to destroy the Corrupted wolf.

Gemma knelt down next to Angel.

“No...No please...” Gemma cradled Angel's body in her arms. His white fur stained by the blood coming from his wound.

“Gemma!” Nox yelled “Gemma we have to Hurry! The Corrupted are closing in!”

Gemma ignored him as she clung to Angel.

“Please don't leave me...”

Angel's fading blue eyes stared up at Gemma's tear filled ones. He wiped away her tears with his paw, then his eyes closed and his body went limp as his soul was whisked away to the world unknown.

Sobs wracked Gemma's body as she cradled Angel's body.

“Gemma! Please! I can't hold them off much longer.”

Gemma looked up and saw Nox by the essence of light. He was holding back the Corrupted with his shadows, but his injuries have weakened him and his barrier was soon to be broken through.

Gemma kissed Angel's head, then stood up and ran.

At that moment, the shadow barrier broke and the Corrupted bounded for Gemma. Just as they reached her, she jumped through the essence of light and into Nox's arms.

A powerful wave of energy burst through the forest. The Corrupted were turned to dust as the light flooded the area, mingled with shadow in perfect harmony.

Life came back to the forest. All of the Corrupted were eradicated and all the creatures of light slowly came out for the first time in years and rejoiced.

Through the faith of a dying mother, the sacrifice of a protective brother, and the connection between the prince of shadow and the princess of light and their love for one another, the forest was saved. And peace and harmony were restored once more.

Heere endeth the Tale of the Little Wide Eyed-Girl