

Fey, the

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a man finds love and acceptance among fairies known as the fey

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The Fey

I had looked through the great woods one hundred times and had found no sign of the little town I had found thirty years previous. I decided to look once more and if unsuccessful to forget the little Fey town altogether. It may have been a figment of my imagination, after all I was going through a terrible divorce at the time it appeared to me. Since I was a child I had dreamed of a place just for me where I could escape the physical abuse of my father. When I found the Fey I didn't believe they really existed anywhere outside my brain, but then why did I look for them these past months? Perhaps I needed some type of closure.

Gingerly I walked through the underbrush of the woods when suddenly a large black bird, startled from its perch, flew at me barely missing my face. Instinctively I closed my eyes and when I opened them again I saw something hidden by brush ahead. As I walked farther I found myself near a clearing lit brightly by sunlight. There before me was the little Fey town reappearing, it seemed, from a state of invisibility. This once lovely place now looked old, abandoned and dark despite the sun's rays. I was taken aback. I had been searching for a beautiful place remembering the loveliness only to find it alone and remote, its beauty gone.

As I stepped out of the thicket in which I stood I heard a familiar sound, the sound of a music box playing a tune. I followed the sound to the town's only church. There I hesitated, feeling the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. I quickly flung open the rotten wooden doors and gasped at what I saw. The pews were full of corpses, most only bones and hair sitting upright as though they had waited for death to claim them.

Once again I heard the music and followed the sound down the aisle past death and found the source of the dirge. There on the floor by the altar sat a figure. I say a figure for I knew not whether it was male or female for it had its head turned from me and its clothing had rotted away. I knelt down beside it closed the music box and turned to look at the face of the figure. I saw clear blue eyes with speckles of gold, it was Marissa. She reached out and placed a bony hand on one of mine.

I began to sob as I took in her physically emaciated condition.

A raspy voice came from the odd figure before me, "We waited for you thinking you would return some day soon. You left without saying goodbye and one or two at a time, devoid of hope, they came here and died. Only hope of your return has kept me alive these past thirty years. I knew you would come."

My sobs subsided slowly as I looked about me at the Fey who had given up on me. "I don't understand." I said in quiet reverence. "Why didn't they live their lives without me?"

Marissa cracked a crooked smile, her face becoming a mass of wrinkles. "We Fey must have a purpose to survive. You invented us in your mind and then left taking with you our only purpose, to serve and to love you."

"I didn't know," a tear slowly ran down my left cheek. "Is there anything I can do for you now?" I asked heartsick at what I had done.

"There is one thing you can do for all of us."

"Anything." I said wiping the tear from my face.

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"Close your eyes and see us the way we were all those years ago." Marissa's eyes shone with new hope, I could not comprehend her purpose. Obediently I closed my eyes and allowed myself to go back to the day I had first heard the music box playing. I had been hunting in the big woods and when I heard the then lilting music I became curious. I followed it's source to a clearing where stood a very small town. Fascinated I stepped into the clearing and I was immediately met by a small child no more than five. Her eyes were deep clear blue with golden specks. She was carrying the now silent music

box. The village was beautiful and charming. As the sunlight shone upon its freshly painted buildings and my senses were stimulated by aromatic flowers planted everywhere. A warm breeze caressed my face and tossed my hair as I followed the little girl whose name I later came to know, into the center of town. It had only one brick paved street. On either side of the only street stood various shops interspersed with small white homes with perfect white picket fences. A man who was standing outside a barber shop saw me and gave out a call and soon I was surrounded by people who seemed to come from no where. They all smiled big and greeted me with friendly laughter, hugs from the women and hardy handshakes from the men.

In the present I could hear a soft voice speaking to me as I sat on a magical stupor. "Do you remember the year you spent with us and how we loved to please you?"

"Yes," I said smiling brilliantly at the Fey. "It's wonderful to be so loved and cared for."

"You gave us purpose and returned our love." Marissa said breathlessly.

Suddenly the stupor ended and I found myself sitting on the dilapidated old pew. "What do you want from me Marissa?"

"Love us again and the Fey will live again." Her excitement was too much for her as she sank back to the dirty floor gasping for air. "Love us, please!" Marissa wheezed.

I closed my eyes and with all the compassion I had in my soul I cried, "I love you!"

When I opened my eyes I was elated for the church was lovely again and the Fey got up and came to greet me. I turned to expecting to see Marissa young again only to find her emaciated body lying dead on the floor.

"She has fulfilled her purpose, to save us and to return your belief in the Fey." a young man spoke lovingly placing a gentle hand on my shoulder.

A few days later I decided to go back to the real world. This time I gathered the Fey all together and promised them I would return in a year and every one after that. This seemed to satisfy them. As I left the village I passed the small and only grave of the Fey, one labeled Marissa.

As I turned my back to the voices crying goodbye the sound suddenly stopped. I turned to see a brightly lit clearing. Even the grave of Marissa had disappeared as only the Fey can.

I have kept my promise, every year following the sound of a music box and to give purpose to the Fey.

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