

## When Death Loved A Mortal

When Death loved a mortal, she would spend eternity waiting for her to return, waiting for the day that the two could be reunited again, for the day that her rot finally released its cruel grip on the one thing that kept her there waiting. She waited as the leaves turned from green to a vibrant forest fire of reds and oranges. She waited as those leaves slowly rotted and a cold and cruel blanket of snow covered their memories. The air went from frigid to cool; from there it went to the stifling summer heat and then to the brisk fall chill, all to return to the beginning. She watched it all alone and waiting, mourning her lost love and cursing the people who took her from her.

She blessed the air and the world that had once if for a moment, sustained and brought light and laughter to that girl. The girl with the mess of strawberry blond curls and the glint of mischief in her wonderful deep brown eyes that seemed to hold an eternity within them, an eternity that she wished they could have shared. And when the girl did return it had been lifetimes, lifetimes without what seemed to be the one light in the cruel world. She would have dreams of her skin rotting and peeling off the bone, it was never morbid or terrifying. Her bones peaked through her skin which was adorned with moss and flowers. A snake explored the depths of her ribs as plants seemed to decorate her body. A grove would surround her, peaceful and calm. It was full of life and a sort of love that the girl couldn't explain. And when she would wake, safe in her bed she never felt fear. It was a strange and cruel peace that she felt. One that seemed to fill her entire being. Death wasn't cruel, she was hurt and scared of losing her again. Death caressed the girl's skin, tracking every part of it as if trying to memorize each inch and centimeter of it. As if, when the girl awoke she wouldn't simply return to the grove when she

slept once more. So, death held onto her, tracing her bones and knowing every dip of her body, every soft curve, and every scar that marred her. And, the girl would lay there, embraced fully by Death and her warmth and gentleness.

Their souls yearned for each other, begging the cruel Gods to leave them be, to allow them the one luxury of each other. When Death loved a mortal, she didn't want to let go, she wanted her. All of her. In life and death, she wanted her forever and the girl wished for the same. The girl was Death's life, the one thing that allowed her cold, dead heart to beat again. They were two halves, made perfectly for the other but simply never allowed to have the other, not the way they wanted. Their eternity was the small, stolen moments they had in slumber. Moments that allowed them a time of tranquility that couldn't be found anywhere but with the other. And, as much as it pained her, Death was happy with that. She watched in the shadows how the sun cascaded down her love's face as if it too was in awe of her beauty. The moonlight seemed to adore her features in a gentle glow that seemed to light the night sky with a new sun. Death couldn't steal her from the light, she couldn't even look away. The girl was gentle and bright, and Death was the opposite. Her darkness snuck into houses while people rested and stole them away from those who loved them. She cursed and marked those who couldn't stay. But the girl seemed to grow light and life with her very smile. She was something that Death wanted but could never have. She remembered the time that the girl was hers. When the girl wasn't mortal when she was life itself. But, the world dragged her away and stole her from Death. And now, the two lived worlds apart with nothing but small moments that joined them. Life and Death, Death and a mortal.