

Short Stories

By P June

The Road

I was traveling down a road with only the knowledge that I needed to get to a certain destination but not knowing exactly which place I had to go to and how I was going to get there and then I stopped. There I stood. I looked to my left and I saw one of the most beautiful settings I had ever seen in my life. There were these big huge hills, bigger than mountains. Their color was light green emerald, with hints of blue. I could see they were covered with trees, with life. And they were far into the distance, one hill after the next. Then I looked to my right and I saw a dark desert that was on a much lower altitude than where I was standing. It was so desolate; it was dark, dark brown and black in the center of the landscape and a lighter yellow brownish color around the edges. There was a windstorm in that direction and the wind blew the dust high over and surrounding the desert. I could hear the wind blowing deeply and ominously. Suddenly finding myself looking at such strange scenes surrounding me, I felt faint and frightened and sank to my knees. I sat on the ground.

But that's not the strangest part. The strangest part was that there was a man standing beside me on this large path that had such completely different scenes on both sides. This man was tall, he had dark hair and was sort of bulky. He wasn't fat, but he wasn't skinny either. He had a very handsome face and he was standing about two feet away from me.

"How are you?" he asked.

I answered. "I'm fine," As I usually answer to people I hardly know.

"That's very good" He said. He then crouched down low to the ground so that we were meeting eye to eye.

"Allow me to outline my purpose in bringing you here..."

I turned my head away. I didn't want to listen to him. The next thing I knew he was right in front of me, very close to me. I felt very frightened. I wanted to get up, to run away from this strange man who could move from one place to the next in the blink of an eye. He held my arm fast so that I couldn't escape. I didn't feel frightened anymore, I knew who he was; he was my guardian angel. And I was dead. He then gently cupped my head in his hands and kissed my forehead with the softest kiss I had ever received, almost like the kiss of a woman. I gave him my hand and we both stood up. He then took me to my destination.



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All This and More

The dark figure brought him up to the top of the steeple and showed him the city. They could see thousands upon thousands of people walking around and going about their business.

“I can give you control of all of these people. You will own each and every one of them, have control of them, and have possession of everything they own including their children and their children’s children. I will give you all this and more if you will bow to me.

“It is written, you shall not tempt the LORD your God,” the man said.

The dark figure then brought the man up to the hill overlooking the whole city and surrounding countryside. They could see the outlines of hundreds of buildings, thousands of houses, and very many farms with big open fields.

“I will give you control of the entire city. You will own all of the land and every single house that you see. All of the profits that the businesses make will go to you. You will be richer than the king of this land if you will kiss my hand.”

“It is written, man does not live by bread alone,” the man said.

The dark figure then brought the man up to stand on the tallest mountain of the land. He could see dozens of cities scattered across the landscape. There were palaces, kingdoms, buildings a thousand times taller than a man. They saw oceans and the shores of other lands yet to be explored.

“I will give you control of every living thing on this Earth. You will be able to command every man, beast, bird, and fish at your will. Everyone will bow to you and would gladly die for you if you so wished it. I will give you all this and more if you would simply follow me.”

“I already have control of these things. For I am the son of God and there is nothing that you may give me control over that I do not already control. Be gone, Satan, and leave me be!” The great man turned his head away from the dark figure in disgust.

The dark figure gave him a scowl with his black eyes. A small, disdainful smile crept slowly into his lips and he gave a bow to the man.

“As you wish, 'great' lord” He said with disdain. “Since there is nothing that I can give that can entice you, I will make my leave. I hope that the people that you care for so much will be as kind to you as I have.” And with a flourish he disappeared.

Jesus sank to his knees as the angels came to tend to him.

In the Forrest

The world spun around him as he felt himself tumbling faster and faster. Branches, twigs, rocks, pebbles, and other little bits and pieces of the forest floor scratched and nicked him and stuck to his hair, clothing and skin. He saw the sky above become smaller and smaller as he fell deeper and deeper into the hole.

Thud

He hit the bottom of the large open hole very hard. The scratches and cuts burned and his side ached so very much it was as if someone had swiped him with a club. He tried to get up but fell back down. His side hurt so much he could hardly move. *Where am I?* He asked himself. He saw the darkness surrounding him and knew that he had fallen into a deep hole. *I fell into a bear trap,* he concluded. He lay back on the ground in exhaustion knowing that they would come looking for him soon. His family would notice that he was missing and would start to look in the forest for him. He would be alright. He didn't feel afraid.

Then he heard a sound. He looked to the side and all around and saw only darkness. This was a very large hole. Was he alone? He started to feel a pang of fear. He tried to get up again but the same old searing pain shot through his body. It was very difficult but he managed to sit himself up. He listened intently, his heart racing.

He heard the crinkling of leaves. It was in the hole and it was walking. The crinkling sounds came closer, closer.

He reached into his shirt and grabbed a hold of the handle to his dagger. When he was old enough to go hunting on his own, his family had always told him to carry his dagger with him every time he went into the forest. He was glad that he had listened to them.

The footsteps stopped.

It was pitch black, he couldn't see *anything* in the darkness of the deep hole. *My god, I hope it's not a bear.*

"Aren't you a cute one."

"What?" He said to the darkness in disbelief. "Who are you? What are you doing here?"

The creature giggled. "I could ask you the same thing dear boy."

The voice was soft and sounded young. *It must be a girl,* he thought to himself. *She must have fallen in herself.*

"Are you trapped here too?" He asked the mysterious girl. "Don't worry, my servants and family will come looking for me soon, they'll rescue you too."

“No.” She said. “I live here.”

He laughed at her. “You are a funny one,” he said with a smile. “It is good to have a sense of humor in times like this dear girl.”

“I’m not a girl.” She said

This girl has a very strange sense of humor, he thought to himself.

“Ok,” He indulged the girl “Then what are you?”

“A Huldra” She said.

She must be joking. He had heard his family tell him tales of the Huldra many times when he was very young. The Huldra was a young maiden who lived in the forest. She was neither human nor beast, but both. He used to believe the stories, as all children believe every tale that they are told, but as he got older and started to approach manhood he realized that such tales were just fantasy and not real.

“Really?” He continued to indulge the girl. It is a shame that it is so dark in here and that I cannot see you in order to prove it.

“I’ll create a light then.”

There was a bright flash. He shielded his eyes from the bright light that emanated a few inches in front of him. His eyes gradually adjusted to the light and he could see the walls of the hole they were in. He turned his head quickly to see where the light was coming from. He saw a round ball of light floating in the palm of a slender hand. And he saw her face right beside that hand.

She was telling the truth; she wasn’t a girl. Her eyes were large and almond shaped. Her eyes were a deep purple and so was her hair. Her hair had a fur like quality to it, was wild and long, it stood out from the back of her head and was tied into large tufts, one on each side. Her nose was triangular and she had two round slits as nostrils, like the nose of a feline. Her ears were slender and pointed at the ends. Her skin had a light purple hue. She was dressed in a style of clothing made out of materials that he had never seen before.

He gasped in shock.

“You *are* a Huldra!” He shouted in surprise.

“Of course, I told you silly.” She said with a smile.

“But it can’t be true, such things don’t exist!”

“I’m just as real as you are” She said in a low voice, leaning closer.

She touched his hand. They were very close together and her face was just a few inches in front of his. They looked into each other's eyes. *She is real*, he thought to himself. They continued to look at each other. He was struck by how beautiful she was, just like the stories that he had heard. It was an otherworldly beauty, like that of a creature from a dream.

“Johan!” He heard a man call from above.

The distant sound broke his trance. He recognized the voice. *It is Papa!* He thought. He turned his head up and looked in the direction of the voice that was calling his name.

“Johan, where are you?” He heard the voice shout again.

“I'm here Papa!” He shouted. He then looked back down in front of him toward the girl.

She was gone.

He looked all around frantically to see where she was. The light was gone and it was very dark again. He felt all around him but touched only air and the dirt and the forest floor beneath him. *Where did she go?* He thought in surprise and shock.

Was it all a dream?

The Argument

Asariel against

Searphiel for

“I have no faith in them.”

The great winger one said as he looked down upon the land below him. He was standing on a very high hill. From his perch he could look upon all that lay before him. Many cities he could see from his vantage point. In the little cities that he saw, he could see the people going about their daily lives; shopping, bickering, haggling, selling, going for strolls with their children, and eating. He saw the grand houses that some of them lived in and the little shacks that others lived in. He saw the well dressed and well to do looking down their noses at others and he saw the beggars making their rounds, looking oh so destitute. He saw almost everything that went on in the city, even the things that went on behind the walls and the closed doors of the buildings and houses. He saw laborers hard at work. He saw children playing around inside the houses and women hurrying to get dinner prepared. He saw couples arguing with each other and parents chastising their children for misbehaving. He even saw (although with a detached eye) couples making love to each other in their bedrooms. He saw everything because he was an angel.

“I have absolutely no faith in them.” Asariel reiterated even more strongly than before.

“Why?” asked Seraphiel, his companion angel who was beside him.

“Well aren’t the reasons obvious?” Asariel asked exasperatingly. “They are so petty. They fight, bicker, compete amongst each other, and stab each other in the back. They care only for themselves and the particular “group” that they belong into. And they care almost nothing for each other. You see the evidence right there before you.”

“Yes,” Seraphiel answered. “I see the evidence before me and I must say that I do have faith in them. Humans are noble creatures who give of themselves. They are capable of so much good and many of them do truly good things for others. They help each other, they care for each other, they care about the general welfare of all, and they love each other.”

“Hmph, typical of you to take their side. Where is the good that you see? All I see are groups of them waging war against the others. They treat their children as they see fit, telling them what to do and forcing them into futures that their children do not wish to take. They are controlling and petty.”

“Well, Asariel. I see some of them giving what little they have to help those less fortunate. I see families helping each other out and sticking together even in great difficulties. I see great love between the couples, love that would make the stars jealous of their intensity and brightness. I can see their hearts.”

“It’s no use arguing with you Seraphiel,” Asariel said exasperatingly. “You simply cannot see.”

“On the contrary, Asariel, I see all too clearly.”

The Piano

She was really very good.

She sat at the piano practicing her recital piece. She moved up and down the keys playing them so exquisitely well. Her fingers danced across the keyboard showing that she had been practicing as she had promised she would. She played the notes just right, playing at just the right tempo, and caressing the keys as only an expert pianist would.

She was wonderful.

She hardly glanced at the keyboard, letting her fingers do the playing for her. She sat erect at the piano with her eyes sometimes closed and she moved her hands up and down on the keys slowly when the tempo slowed, almost like a seductive caress. Then she sped up her movements as the tempo increased and the song slowly built up to a crescendo. She brought her head up slightly as she quickly brought her fingers down on the climactic note. The crescendo note resounded loudly throughout the room and slowly faded. Her fingers lingered before she brought them back to the keys to caress them once again for the final notes. The final notes were played slowly and gently which brought the piece to an end.

“Bravo!” I clapped my hands as I applauded her performance.

“Thank you, sir.” She said, a smile beaming on her face. She was always so eager to please me. She would often tell her parents that I was very nice and that she liked me as her piano teacher. She looked at me a moment longer with her big blue eyes before she cast them down, a hint of a blush beginning to show on her cheeks. I suspected she had a crush on me, which had happened to me on several other occasions with many of my other students both past and present. It happened all of the time and it was nothing to get alarmed about.

But she was different.

I had to admit she was rather beautiful for someone so young. Her features were very fine and delicate and her face was very pretty. Her long chestnut hair was always full of shine and luster. Her lips were light pink and rather full. She was very thin and petite, her chest and hips only but showing the first hints of a blossoming womanhood.

I found myself staring at her a bit too long and I moved to get up, clearing my throat along the way. I walked toward her. She was still sitting at the piano bench and she had lifted her eyes to look at me as I got up. I stood before her. She remained seated and looked up directly into my eyes. She looked at me with such innocence in her eyes. But there was a hint of something more. In them I saw adoration, hope...and desire.

I leaned in closer so that my face was very close to hers.

“Christine?” I said her name in a soft voice.

“Yes, Mr. Landon?” She said even more softly.

“Let me show you how to play it a little better. We’ll play it together...”

Haunting Memories

He stood before the painting of his dear wife. How beautiful she was. Long golden flowing blond hair framed a round youthful face. Her eyes were emerald green and in them he could see such brightness and innocence. They had an impish light to them betraying her inner character. Her nose was petite, almost a snub, and her cheeks were slightly flushed which, he thought, gave her a very becoming charm.

“Oh, my dear Alania” He sighed to himself.

“How I’ve missed you”

He allowed his eyes to gaze upon the beautiful portrait of his wife for a few seconds more before he quickly turned his head and slowly walked out of the hall and into his wife’s bed chamber. It was a huge room, beautiful and filled with the most exquisite furniture and antiques. He liked to call it the red room. The room was ruby colored; almost everything in the room was colored ruby red or had a near ruby hue to it. The bed which was located in the center of the far side of the room was very large. It had layers of red bedding on top of it. He walked over to the bed and felt the sheets. They were soft and velvety to the touch. He ran his hands up and down the bed cover, caressing it, just as he used to caress her while she was alive.

He walked over to the bed stand where he saw his wife’s comb lying there. He picked it up to examine it. It was a small thing that fit into the palm of his hand, intricately shaped. The prongs of the comb were very thin; designed to comb hair that was fine. It was crystal blue in color and delicately ornamented with aquamarine jewels. While he stood there looking at the comb in his hand, memories of his late wife came flooding back...

“...and I want the servants to prepare the goose cooked well done,” She said in her soft voice.

“Of course my dear, I’ll be sure that they remember,” He told her tenderly.

She turned her head and continued to comb her hair using the blue comb while sitting on the small chair in front of her vanity mirror. He stood there watching as she did so. She slowly combed through section upon section of her long flowing golden blond hair and paid no mind to him.

“Alania?” He broke the silence.

“Yes, my darling?” She answered.

“You do love me, don’t you?”

“Of course I do, my pet.” She said still looking at herself in the mirror and combing her hair.

He walked up towards her from behind and continued to look at her through the mirror. She paid no mind to him and continued to comb her long hair, now working on other sections. She hardly ever paid much attention to him even in their everyday lives. He didn't care. He didn't mind fawning on her while she showed little interest in him. He used to be happy just to be near her even if it was as the pathetic husband who loved and adored his wife far more than she did him. But now it was different. He had received a letter in the mail...

A letter had come to the mansion by post and it was addressed to his wife. Unfortunately, the head servant who usually takes care of receiving the mail was ill and his illiterate daughter received the letter and she thought it was addressed to the master because it had a very official looking red seal on it. The husband was in a hurry to get somewhere and already running late when the servant girl handed the letter to him, curtsayed, and left. Not thinking twice, he opened the envelope and took the letter out to read it. That's when his heart sank.

It was a love letter to his wife from a neighbor of his. It was the first of many he would intercept from many different lovers...

He continued to look at his wife in the mirror combing her hair. *How beautiful she is* he thought. *What a shame it will be when she dies.*

The First Kiss

There they stood together in the fields. The sun was setting low in the sky but there was still enough light for them to see each other clearly. The light was dim and there was a reddish hue to everything. The corn was high and almost ready to be plucked.

He couldn't believe she came. There she stood, so much shorter than he, petit and slender, almost like a china doll. She wore the red skirt that he saw her in the first time he laid his eyes on her all of those months ago. And she was looking at him with those big, bright, dark, eyes of hers.

They paused for a moment. They looked deeply into each other's eyes and saw within each other what they had hoped and longed to see for so long. She took a step forward and they were so close. She could hear him breathing deeply, eyes full of desire. Oh, he wanted this for so long. So long! And yet, he couldn't believe this was actually happening!

Gloria looked deeply into his eyes. They were deep set and bluish grey. She laid her head on his chest and breathed in his scent. He smelled rich and earthy, like a pine or an oak tree.

Then she whispered his name and they kissed for the first time.

Blind Love

He could hear many things. He heard the humming sound of the train as it sped along the rail carrying all of the passengers including himself. He could hear the murmurings and chit chat of everyone around him. He heard not only the conversations of the people who were right next to him but also the ones of the people who were very far away from him, even the people all the way on the other end of the train. He heard a mother telling her child to sit still and behave until they got off. He heard a man clearing his throat beside him and a person turning the page of a newspaper 15 seats behind him. He could hear all of these things because it was one of the only ways that he could experience the world. He was blind.

He felt the train slowing down.

“The next stop is Dudley Station” He heard the recorded train intercom say in a woman’s voice.

He got up to get off of the train. He knew that the train was full and he didn’t want to miss his stop. The people around him knew he was blind and they were sure to move out of his way and give him plenty of room.

“Why is he traveling alone? Shouldn’t he have a guide dog or something?” He heard a lady who sat a few seats away whisper to her friend.

She probably thinks I can’t hear her, he thought.

He usually traveled alone with only his walking stick. He used to regularly have a traveling companion, sometimes a friend or a guide dog but he grew tired of feeling so dependent. As he got older over the years he wanted to feel more independent and so he gradually started to make trips alone with only his walking stick and now he regularly does so. He usually got around all right. But today was one of those rare exceptions.

“Ouch!” He heard a woman say beside him. He felt that he had stepped on the tip of a pointed shoe.

“Pardon me,” the blind man took a step back.

“Watch it!” A young man said behind him as he knocked into him.

“Excuse me,” the blind man quickly apologized.

“Here, let me help you,” he heard a young woman say to his left.

“Thank you very much, but I...” He started to say.

He felt a small slender hand touch his arm which silenced him.

“Which stop do you want to get off at?” The young woman asked.

“Uh...Dudley Station,” The blind man answered.

“I’m getting off at there too. Here, let me help you get through this mob.”

He felt another slender hand on his arm and both hands held his arm gently. He felt a tug pulling him and, after initially resisting, he allowed her to guide him. She was very close to him as she held his arm, their bodies just touching. She was about a foot shorter than he, maybe more, and her body felt quite warm next to his. Her hair, which was very close to his nose, smelled of strawberries, cloves... and something else. It was quite nice. He felt his heart rate increase. He could hear people shuffling around him in order to let him pass. *Her body feels so warm..* His mind began to wander. *Come on! Get your head out of the gutter...* He heard the train doors open right in front of him, she was still very close, guiding him, and together they exited the train at the station.

“Thank you Ms...” He said turning toward her.

“Preston...but you can call me Helena,” She said without skipping a beat.

“Thank you Helena,” he said with a warm smile.

“What’s your name?” She asked.

“Andrew.”

“Nice to meet you Andrew,” She said with a smile.

“It was very nice of you to help me. Well...I must be on my way.” He said, not wanting to waste anymore of her time. He started to walk away.

“Where are you headed?” She asked as she started to follow him, walking beside him.

“I was headed toward the downtown district.” Andrew answered.

“Oh...meeting someone?” Helena asked inquisitively.

“No...” He said with a shy smile. “I was just going to walk around and...enjoy the air.” He said awkwardly.

“Oh...yeah, I sure like air too!” She said playfully, breathing in and out deeply.

Andrew blushed a little. *She seems very outgoing,* he thought. *And she has such a pleasant sounding voice...*

“Do you like mocha?”

“What?” He asked confusedly.

“Do you like coffee? Because I was just about to grab a cup and maybe a danish at the coffee shop on 1st and 7th and I was wondering if you’d like to join me?” Helena asked rather forwardly.

“You’re very kind... but you don’t need to feel sorry for me because I’m blind.” He flat out replied. Andrew had always been very sensitive about his blindness, that’s one of the reasons why he tried his best to be as independent as possible. He didn’t like pity.

“No!” She said defensively. “I really do want to have a drink with you. It’s just that, I don’t have anyone *else* to go with and you seem nice enough.” She paused for a moment. “I’d just like to enjoy a cup of coffee with someone.” She explained.

Andrew thought for a moment. “Sure, I’d love to” He said finally.

“Great! Let’s go then,” She exclaimed happily.

She slipped her arm through his and they walked towards the coffee shop.

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