

LIGHT IN THE DARK

A SHORT STORY

BY:

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The fire seared her skin. It popped and blistered beneath her soul, killing her slowly, forcing her to see the gratification on those who sought her demise, from those who ached for her death. An enemy to her kind, an unearthly being, given life in the purest of light...

Celestia jolted awake. Reliving her past life yet again. The dreams made her fearful everyday that the past would repeat. She sat up in bed, her silvery purple wings unfolding, flexing, waking on their own. Celestia wiped the sweat from her forehead and pulled her soft black hair out of her face, tying it behind her. She looked out her window, towards the twilight of the day, the dawn to her kind. On the nightstand, the time on her clock told her that it was nearing her waking. She could almost hear the bells of the town going off. Would today be the day? she asked herself. So many visions blinded her big purple eyes from the life she was meant to live; half of what she imagined had never happened. But the burning, her burning at the stake alongside her brethren, that had happened, so many centuries ago. She wondered what it would feel like to burn again. Would she get caught up in another raid like so many of her kind? Would her luck run out? Would she die again and leave behind a life unfulfilled?

Her cat jumped on her lap and licked her chin, distracting her from her dismal thoughts. A smile came upon her face. She hated her weak moments, her sad thoughts. Her kitten brought her some solace, making her happy. Celestia kissed her cat and graced it with glitter and sparkles that were her birthright. But it was also the curse of her kind, brought the Shadowlings, those that lived in darkness and thrived in it towards her. While her kind was the light, their hunters were the darkness.

Once again she pushed the thoughts away. Move on, she told herself, but she could not move on. They haunted her dreams and her memories.

The shower she took was icy cold, she did not like hot showers, they reminded her too much of her memories. Every cold shower made her feel happy and brought her peace. If only every

moment of her life felt like this.

Celestia fluffed her wings as she stepped out of the shower and got dressed. Time to live another day, she thought and hoped as she pulled back her hair and fed her cat. She took another look at her apartment before leaving. Her cat was eating lazily, its bum and tails in the air, the dim light from the sky above lit her bed like a streak of sunlight. Every day she left her home as though as though she would not see it again, and she closed the door hopeful that she would return home.

The twin moons graced her path as she walked along the street. Her skin glowed as the purest of light bounced off her skin. She stopped mid-step, fearful, and against all logical reason, looked down an alleyway. Nothing was there, but that didn't mean that one of 'them' couldn't be. Creatures of darkness, born from the shadows, enemies of the light. Creatures that sought quiet and darkness.

A dragon fairy flew by her head, causing her to nearly jump from her skin. Celestia watched it flutter away before looking back down the dark alley, sure she was being watched. Fixing her purse onto her shoulder, she continued on her way to work, her pace quick.

She was the first to arrive at the offices. Her key nearly fell from her unsteady hands as she unlocked the door. She flicked on light after light, to scare away as much darkness as she could. She waved her hand as she stared at her desk. Too many shadows, she thought.

Celestia stared at the empty orb she kept locked in her desk, trying to summon a vision to her head, a prophecy waiting to be born. Nothing came, only the shadows grew. A door clicked open, footsteps echoed and the shadows grew thicker, dimming the lights above her head.

“Who's there?” No one answered. Celestia grabbed her enchanted dagger that she kept under her desk, spelled and blessed. “Answer me?”

“Hello Celestia.”

Celestia spun around, her breath caught. Those eyes, so full of hatred and anguish, stared back at her. It was shadow demon. The very same shadow demon that continued to kill her century after century.

“You. Please, I beg of you—”

“Hush, Celestia. I have not come to kill you . . . Yet. I'm beginning to think it's futile, you'll

simply be reborn again and again.”

Her hand on her dagger began to falter as more fear began to grip her heart. She felt like his hand was actually gripping her heart. “What do you want?”

“To talk. I know you dream of them. You were one of the first to die, burned at such a primal time in our existence.” His cold red eyes never left her face.

“What do you want?”

“Like I said, I want to talk. But please, not here. If you'll simply take my hand, we can go someplace more private.” Celestia stared deeply into his hungry eyes. She didn't want to go, didn't want to die, but she felt as though she should. The orb glowed with a vibrant red light and she dropped the dagger.

“Don't kill me,” she pleaded, taking his hand.

“Don't worry, not today.” Darkness engulfed her, frightened her. She fell on her wings, fearful he could break them again. She squinted in anticipation. Nothing happened, an animal licked her chin. Her eyes jerked. She was at home.

“Thank you.”

“You've never had a pet before.”

“When you've died as many times as I, a pet is like a grounder, to make me feel safe.”

“You're never safe.”

“Please, what is it you want of me?”

“To know of death Celestia. My kind, we do not die, cannot, yet we yearn for peace. Is death peaceful?”

“It is . . . peaceful, but in a different way. It is joy and sadness, as though something was ripped from me, and as though something else is granted, something more wonderful. It is light, it is life. An explosion of feeling. Does your kind have no peace of any sort?”

“I should not be here. This was a mistake.” Faster than she thought possible, he gripped her throat tightly, and fear tightened around her heart. His grip did not tighten.

“Please, I can help, let me try to help and should I fail, my life is yours.”

“How can you help me Celestia?”

“As you said, I am one of the first, and with each rebirth something magical is always gifted onto me. Please, I can help. Let me try.”

His grip tightened and a tear escaped her eye. Death, to feel death's embrace was a chilling thought. To die again was a chilling thought.

"You creatures are beautiful on your darkest hours. *You* are beautiful in your fear of death." He released her and Celestia backed until she hit the wall. A feather fell from her wings and she stared at him as he picked it up, gently admiring it. The feather glowed a shimmering purple as he continued to stare at it.

"Will you help me Celestia? I see greatness in you, magic and life you cannot see. It draws me in and until now, I've always sought to extinguish it."

"I will try to help you."

He stood up. "I am called Void. You are one of the first, one of the few Reborn. I want peace, I want life."

"I will try to help, Void." He vanished in shadows, the feather taken along. She sat there for hours until she heard the warning bells, the bells of the hunts. She waved the window shut and hugged her cat, no longer fearful. Celestia no longer heard the bells of warning, of raiding, of people vanishing. She heard the bells of a revolution centuries in waiting.