

Heart of Lazarus

By: Steffi Rotella

I was never one to believe in catering to the fantasies of desire, nor did I feel the need to seek out what needed to be sought, and I felt neither troubled nor unsatisfied by the spinster's life I knew befell me. No, not I. Not until Lazarus.

Lazarus; a gentleman of such quality that there was no match for; a stranger from a strange place; a lawless and a thief, plotting solely to steal the foolish heart of the fairest maiden of his eye. Yes, he, with his allure so compelling, bewitched me without difficulty. I was taken by him, so taken in fact that, against all better judgment and the wishes of my parents, we married before the close of the month.

Now you may think me mad for marrying on such an illogical whim, but believe not your logical mind. I am not mad, not in the general sense of the term. No, the only scourge of madness I'd ever suffered was the madness of love; a madness so powerful that it could bend the most rational of minds to its will.

I had been the most rational of persons once, but that time—a time long before Lazarus—was nothing more than a memory. Lazarus was like a disease, slowly infecting me, clouding my mind of all logical means of thinking. I never imagined liking the sensation of it as much as I had.

For all his love—and love there was much—, Lazarus was cruel. He teased me—oh, how he loved to tease me!—and kept me constantly on my toes. There was never a moment he was sedentary, and by association I was the same. He craved a life of constant thrill and often teased me when I couldn't keep up.

I thought the teasing was cruel, but Lazarus showed me the error of my ways. His cruelest act of all was parting himself from my side. Choosing death over me. He left me behind, discarding his mortal vessel to reach the Kingdom Above. Abandoning me. Leaving me with nothing more than sorrow and the memories of a happiness I could no longer attain.

I resented him then, but no longer. For now I am reserved and thoughtful. Hear not the vengeful spite of a lover once scorned, but the sorrowful longing of a hopeless romantic. A romantic turned cynic. A cynic of all things I once viewed as beautiful and pure.

For loneliness will do to romantics what the plague did to all. Taint them. Break the very spirit within their mortal corpse and leave them a hollow husk of skin.

It was this intense desire not to be alone that brought about my epiphany. For then, I become clear of mind and pure of soul. The object of my affection became clear to me. It was not his body that I desired still, but his heart; the place in which still housed his soul.

His soul, the missing piece of my own, was all I wished to hold onto. This was not a want, but a need. I could not be without him any longer.

At the hour of twelve, when the waking world lay dead, I was filled with life. A furious urgency took hold of me, so sudden, so powerful. I could do nothing else but listen to it. Let it guide me from my home—once a happy, lively place—to the home of the heaviest sleepers.

It was an overtaking of ambition that brought me there, a shovel and satchel in hand, but it was my undying love that truly reconnected us.

For now, I am whole again. I feel again as I once did, like a beautiful fool who cares not for rationality. The world shines again, beautiful and pure, and I can thank you for that, lover. My Lazarus Dear. Your heart may no longer beat like my own, but it matters not. I have you—your heart in a new glass vessel—and now we are together again, two halves made whole, never again to be parted. For, you see, my dear, I love you with all my heart, and now, holding yours within the jar in my hands, I am certain you feel the same.