

An ornate red door with gold hardware and a beaded curtain, with light streaming through. The door is framed by a gold border with intricate scrollwork. The curtain is made of many small, light-colored beads. The light is very bright, creating a strong glow and casting a shadow on the floor.

THE
ENCHANTING LIGHT

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It was a gorgeous dawn. The glow of the early winter sunrise covered the sky with yellowish golden and red hues. The glistening pearls of night dew were enjoying the warmth of the sunlight clung to the blades of the lush green grass. Rebecca got up early with the first ray of light. The stillness of the early morning scene reminded her of the famous quote, "Dawn is friend of the muses."

There were lots of activities going on in the premises. The monks were getting ready for the chanting of mantras, lamas looked fresh and energetic in orange robes. They were busy cleaning the assembly hall. The monastery rituals were to be completed in time.

Rebecca took a deep breath and thanked God for the beautiful day. It was her fortieth birthday. Though she touched forty but she looked quite young for her age. A well toned petite figure, firm breasts, wrinkle less face, high cheek bones, straight lustrous mahogany hairs made her look much younger for her age.

She had two glasses of warm water, did bit of stretching and went for a shower. Draped in colorful satin wrap around and a woolen red coat she was looking pretty.

Quickly she had her prayers, settled for a light breakfast of boiled corns and a dry toast, she poured red herbal tea in a tall bamboo glass. The aroma of her freshly brewed tea filled the air with a scent of cinnamon. In the meanwhile her mother, Samantha brought roasted puffed rice in a bowl for her which she politely refused. She reminded her about the morning assembly.

"I hope you did not forget about the assembly mom! I have to reach the hall to see the seating arrangements. So much to do!...Butter tea and muffins have to be prepared. Ah! that reminds me, have you told Kavin uncle to get fresh flowers for decoration?" Rebecca asked Samantha.

Samantha nodded her head in affirmation, "Yes, you will get the flowers. Kavin was worried about today's tea arrangements. I assured her that you have personally taken care of everything. Just make sure it goes well."

"Oh yes! I will manage that. You need not worry. Joe is there to help me" she replied confidently.

Today was going to be a big day for the monastery which is like a home away from home. Dalai lama was coming to the Lepung monastery to address all. He would be giving pearls of wisdom to young lamas.

When Samantha left Tibet she hardly knew where she would settle for rest of her life. David Lyngdoh betrayed her and eventually their ten years of steady marriage came to an end. She was totally dejected, felt immense pain, so much that she left the country with her five years old daughter and reached India on the insistence of his childhood friend Joe.

Joe worked here as a catering in-charge in the hostel canteen to procure food for young lamas. She was a good cook and Joe gave her a job in the kitchen. Samantha was in awe to see the giant architectural marvel. The peaceful, serene surroundings of the building had a calming effect on Samantha's otherwise disturbed mind and depressed soul. She was given a single room accommodation where she started from the scratch with Rebecca who felt lost in an alien atmosphere. Samantha seldom spoke to anyone in the monastery about her past. With her efficiency, hard work and simplicity she won the hearts of the management and the entire staff of

monastery. Rebecca took over the charge once Samantha retired at sixty five. Her tired bones had no energy left for the taxing job.

Rebecca had one last glance in the mirror, she kissed her mom who instantly woke up from her memories and blessed Rebecca once again on her birthday. Rebecca greeted Eda who was waiting outside. They both started walking towards assembly hall.

“How is Joe uncle recovering from fever?” asked concerned Rebecca.

” Well... he is feeling better dear. Mom is slightly worried for his health. How much I would miss my father today you can very well understand”. said emotional Eda.

“I appreciate your feelings for your father. Joe uncle and you have done so much for us. My mom got her identity back because of her, may God bless him always.” she softly pressed Eda’s hand.

” You know how excited I’m today.” chirped Rebecca to change the mood of the conversation. Gosh ! I can’t believe my stars ! In a short while I.... I mean I, Rebecca, would be actually meeting Dalai Lama. pinch me Eda....and pinch me hard “

” He is the inspiration of your life. Everyone knows that you have grown up reading his thoughts and philosophy.” said Eda.

A strict disciplinarian herself Rebecca implemented them in her daily life, she has devoted her youth to this monastery and found bliss in cooking meals for everyone present there. She followed and practiced Buddhism which made her a very positive soul. Eda went to the medical room to get medicines for Joe, Rebecca entered the prayer hall.

As Rebecca was arranging the flowers in front of the huge statue of Buddha she heard strange sound as if someone tried opening the main door. She spontaneously turned towards the direction from where the sound had come. To her utter surprise she found the door ajar..... the golden light was entering through. She was stupefied and her eyes opened wide, she could feel the strong vibrations in the air. Her body turned cold and her feet went numb as her gaze fixed on the light while she was searching for the source of this enchanting light...

***** by Soul and Spirit

The light was so bright, brighter than anything she has ever seen, yet its illuminating effect was so mild on her skin, that her skin glowed. There was something about the light, something enchanting, there were little gold flakes of lights that were moving towards her, they were changing, they changed into different shapes, first they played with her hair, made it glow and then they formed the shape of love, then they made it beat.

Ohhh my, Rebecca chuckled, it was fascinating, she was elated, then they changed into a rose flower, a beautiful glistening flower, she was a lover of flowers, but nothing so enchanting like what she was staring at, then they formed a gift box, a gold box wrapped with purple ribbon, purple was her favorite colour, the box settled on her head. She took it, opened it, wow, she exclaimed, it was a gold bracelet made of light, so beautiful, she couldn't resist wearing it, as soon as she wore it, she was in a warp that took her through a tunnel, then she was there, in a world she never would've imagined..

It was a garden, a garden so perfect like the garden of Eden she thought. As she walked through, she saw a little girl singing *twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wish I could be you,*

Rebecca, you're singing it wrongly her mother said,

I know ma, I just want to be like the stars, I want to glow, the little girl said,

You will one day my angel, her mother said

Rebecca laughed, she remembered vividly how she loved singing the song, and how her mother always corrected her, she missed her childhood, problem free she sighed. She looked far ahead, she saw two young lads, they looked so in love, the young girl was cupped in the young boys arms, while he ran his hands through her hair, then through her skin, she felt the touch, then he kissed the girl, she felt it too, he defined the softness of her lips with tenderness, then he ran a hand down to her waist, then back up and cupped her breast, stop it Liam, the girl moaned

Oh Liam, Rebecca moaned, she remembered that day, the day he took her virginity, painful but beautiful, he was soft on her, he had a kind heart, then she remembered how he cheated on her with that red-haired stripper, and got her pregnant, she cursed, bastard, but she knew she made him do it, it was wasn't his fault, a man gotta be a man she muttered, but it did not stop her from loving him, neither him from loving her until he left.

Hi Rebecca, a little voice called out

Hey gorgeous, she replied and the little girl smiled. Her smile was so innocent that it reminded her of herself when she was young, how did you know my name?

Everyone knows everyone here, its our little secret, the little girl said still smiling

Where am I? Rebecca asked,

You're in paradise she replied, a place where you are suppose to be, Come, let me take you to HIM, he will show you

Who is HIM? Rebecca asked

Come with me the little girl beckoned, she found herself doing so, but she knew it wasn't her will, the bracelet had this powerful effect on her that she couldn't resist, but she loved it. She has always been a strong-willed woman, that does not succumb to anything, but for the first time, she was enjoying the pleasure of being controlled.

As she stepped into the temple, her clothes suddenly changed into a white goddess robe that traveled all the way down her legs, revealing her thin waist and the grace of her hips, her hair instantly curled up to expose her uptight cheek bone and her long necks, she stared at a mirror across the hall, she had never seen herself look so pretty in years, her beauty was stolen from her when Liam hurt her by leaving, she would never forget the pain he caused her, but today, in this moment, she was the prettiest woman in the world.

You look beautiful Rebecca you did not change much, a voice said behind her, she could recognise the voice, it was a voice that made love to her, a voice that made her laugh, she turned around, and there he was, she was stunned, it was like she was 17 again, she could never hate him no matter how much she tried, he was her first love, staring at him brought back all the memories, she felt cold chills travel through her legs, she hadn't been with anyone since he passed away, she thought she lost her sexuality, but there she was with a bag full of longings

He moved towards her, ran his fingers through her face like he knew what she was thinking, I am sorry Rebecca, I am sorry I left you, there are things you will never understand, I did it for us, you have to believe me, I love you, I

Liam, please stop, you know it is crazy talking to a dead man

I am not dead Rebecca, I am alive, you have to find me, he said

Aha! Now you're saying you went d'jango? I saw the letters, you wrote them, your suicide note, remember, Oh, Spare me that crap, and if you're alive, how come you did not care how I survived all these years, why now she said

He looked her straight into her eyes, he knew it would melt her, then he traced her lips and said, this is to show you that I never left, then he kissed her, and said find me, then he was gone, she stood there, tears rolling down her eyes, she turned around and looked at the mirror and said, find you? Where do I start?

The light will guide you, just follow it, his vanishing voice said

Rebecca, Rebecca, wake up, wake up Samantha and Eda called out, then she felt cold water on her face,

Ouchh she screamed, stop it

Are you okay, said Eda, I found you lying here,

She opened her eyes, wondering what had happened? Was it a dream or was it real, but as she opened her eyes, Samantha and Eda screamed, Oh My God!

*****by I-read

Rebecca looked at both of them, confused as to why they were shouting.

“Why are you guys shouting? What is wrong Eda?” she asked, a pit of dread forming in her stomach.

Eda looked at her for a moment, as if composing herself, trying to find words to describe what she was seeing.

“Your eyes are glowing Rebecca. Can’t you feel it yourself?” Eda whispered to her.

“What happened to you, how did you faint all of a sudden?” Samantha, who had been speechless all the while, found her voice.

My eyes are glowing...Rebecca tried to wrap her head around the fact...so whatever I saw was not a dream, it was something, though I don't know yet what that something is.

Rebecca tried to sit up to look at herself in the mirror, when she became aware of some object in her hand. Opening the fingers, she saw a familiar locket. It took her a moment to place it. So many years had passed since she had last seen it. *Of course! It is Liam's favourite locket*, stunned she thought to herself. He had been wearing it when he had left. She knew that because, he never parted with that locket.

How did this come to me...suddenly she remembered Liam putting something in her hand as he said find me. So that was all true? Liam is still alive? Where is he, if he is still alive? Why didn't he come to meet me? Why did he leave in the first place? What was that place? Paradise? How did I reach there?

Millions of questions erupted in her mind at once. But at the back of all that chaos, was a solid happiness knowing that there is a possibility that Liam is alive! And he still loves her! The thought was enough to start a stream of tears.

“Why are you crying?” she broke from her reverie hearing Eda’s voice and looked up.

“The glow is gone!!” Eda said in a shocked voice. “Your eyes are back to normal. What is going on Rebecca” she asked in a thoroughly worried voice now.

As she was about to reply, the bells started ringing, signaling the arrival of someone at the monastery. All of them were brought back to the present in a second, reminded of the impending visit of Dalai Lama.

“We will talk about this later. For now, let me see all the arrangements. I think the bells we heard must have been him arriving” Rebecca said, getting up and checking if there were any wrinkles on her dress.

All of them agreed to gather at Rebecca’s room, later at night to talk about this and left for their own work.

Will Dalai Lama be able to shed any light on this strange event...a sudden thought crossed Rebecca's mind..

*****by Saya

Rebecca watched in awe, at the radiant face . It looked so calm , so tranquil ,so pure... yet there was a distinct aura about it ,a certain angelic quality that assured her that, what transpired an hour or so back was not a dream . It was a vision and the owner of that beaming face held the clue . Yes , only he , his holiness ,the Dalai lama , could free her from this misery.

As she stood there , in one corner of the hall , behind the sea of monks in red robes ,all lost in chants, she felt a warm gaze on her . Instinctively she looked up and saw his eyes penetrate her's . She beheld those eyes fascinated , almost as if in a hypnotic trance .

And then it happened... She heard voices talking ..whispering ..chanting...

'Rebecca', she heard someone whisper , in her ear...She looked around baffled... But ,the voice that called her seemed to come from a distance....

And then her eyes fell on him ,standing in the centre of the hall , analyzing her reaction , expecting her to respond . That was when the sudden realization hit her , like a bolt of lightning..

It was the voice of the 'Dalai Lama' , she could hear him yet his lips didn't stir..but his eyes were fixed on her ,till she heard him again 'Rebecca' . 'Yes' , she responded , looking up at him , not knowing what to expect anymore...

Suddenly she had a warm feeling inside her right palm ,and she opened it... The heat was emanating from the locket and as she stared at it , it seemed to gleam , like the luminous sun ; as if a thousand effulgent rays were struggling to be set free , from inside it .

Then she saw it , the source of the illumination – a crack in the locket. She couldn't believe what she saw ...'Oh ,my god , it can be opened !' , Rebecca exclaimed loudly , unable to contain her excitement ,at this new found discovery .

But she soon realized her folly , as the assembly hall fell silent abruptly , hundreds of eyes staring at her , expressing their disapproval...

'Oh , I am so sorry !' , she cried , the color of her face turned a bright scarlet .As she made her way out from the hall , feeling embarrassed , the warmth inside her palm returned .

Rebecca was about to open her palm and release the locket from her tight grip , so she may try to open it , when she felt a firm hand on her shoulder . Aghast ,she turned to see Eda , standing right behind her . Relieved , she spoke , 'Thank god it is you ,Eda..... I...' , as she was about to narrate her strange rendezvous with His Holiness , The Dalai Lama , she retracted . Something in Eda's eyes didn't look right...

Eda looked unusually nervous , and as usual , Rebecca suppressed her elation , and tried to find out the cause of friend's anxiety . 'What is Eda..? Are you alright..? Is something the matter...' , she shot out a volley of questions at Eda .

Eda remained silent. Rebecca had a queer feeling of impending doom..mustering courage she asked , 'Is it uncle Joe...?Is he alright..??' . But before she could interrogate Eda anymore , a sudden wave of excruciating pain washed through her whole body , as she saw blood trickling down , from her head . Dazed , Rebecca shot out her hand and touched her head . Warm , blood covered her palm s

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and the locket , as she gasped for breath . Then with a loud 'thud' ,she hit the floor , sprawled on her back ,in a pool of dark blood .

As life ebbed away , minute by minute ,Rebecca opened her eyes one last time , before losing consciousness...Uncle Joe and Eda , stared at her , a cold , wild look in their eyes .

The tip of the hammer in Uncle Joe's hand glistened and so did the locket that Eda now held in her hand....And then it was all darkness.....

***** by Sweety

Whoever said that life begins at forty is absolutely mistaken. Rebecca lays motionless on the hard floor as red thick blood from her temple seeps through the fabric of the cream coloured carpet in a corridor just outside the hall. They said that your life will flash before your eyes when you're dying but it was Rebecca who flashed before the eyes of her murderers. She had one final glance at the thief and her murderers' silhouettes before the artichoke void engulfed her completely. Aside from the glistening hammer and the locket, and the cold wild look on the culprits' faces, she saw something else... *envy*.

Then she was gone.

It felt like she was flowing and being pushed down into nothingness. It felt like she's being sucked and warped into a narrow tunnel. She is being pulled by something towards the unknown. The wristlet gave an enticing golden glow and reminded her that what happened this morning really did happen. She almost forgot about that golden wristlet.

Liam's kiss, having his sun shaped locket in my hand and my friends' betrayal really took place... and this golden band wrapped around my wrist, whatever this is... it just saved my life.

For a moment, she was convinced that she was dead until her body plunged into the warm water. She held her breath a second too late for the water has already entered her lungs. When she resurfaced the sea, she had to persistently cough it out until her lungs were cleared of fluids. It wasn't too deep. She could feel the sand on her feet and the water was levelled two inches above her shoulders. She tip toed then swam her way to the shore. It was still dark but there was a distant light stationed just above the hill. She knew exactly *where and when* she is at. It was the fortnight of Liam's death. Rebecca did not even sit to rest when she got out of the water.

She made her way through the trees until she found the pathway to the house. Anyone could have stumbled and tripped considering it was dark but Rebecca was not *anyone*. She learned by heart how every root is twisted, which steps to avoid and all the bends in the road. She knows her own way *home*.

"The light will guide you," Liam said to her this morning.

I hate it when you talk in riddles Liam. It could mean anything but right now, this is the only light I see...

Rebecca turned the knob clockwise and entered her home. It's been long since she was here but she remembers where everything should be, except for one. There was a part of her that wished she never met him. She would have chosen and settled with the emptiness in her when she didn't know it was there. She felt the vacancy Liam left her not just in this house, but in her life as well.

She tried to hold back the tears welling up in her eyes but she could not contain them. She found herself curled up in a ball, sobbing on the bed they used to share. She hugged the sheets close to her chest and thought about Liam. She missed laughing with him and she missed their dim-witted fights too. Oh how she wished she could have another fight with him. She never fancied bickering but it was the way Liam makes up with her that she likes the most. He would always be the first one to say sorry even if it was Rebecca's fault. He would rather willingly lose the argument than lose her.

"I am sorry Rebecca, I am sorry I left you, there are things you will never understand, I did it for us, you have to believe me, I love you," Liam's words echoed from their conversation this morning.

He sounded so real. He felt so alive.

"Why did you bring me here Liam? Why am I here if you're not? I'm so frustrated because you kept saying you love me and you care about me and that you want to prove that you'll stay? Well, bullshit! Point proven! So much for staying Liam!," Rebecca shouted in vexation.

A strong wind blew the curtains and the papers on Liam's desk. Rebecca unwillingly stood to close the shutters and pick up the papers that were scattered on the floor and place them back on his desk when she saw a letter addressed to her.

To:

Rebecca

That was the only thing written on the envelope. She gently opened her letter. She knew it was from Liam. She should have opened it a long time ago but she couldn't gather much courage to do the task. She's afraid of knowing what his farewell words would be.

My Sunshine,

I will always be here even when you think I'm not. Always have faith, kindness, hope and love in your heart. Be good to yourself. Don't be afraid of being alone and don't be scared to make mistakes. I will always love you in all of my forms, Rebecca.

Always,

L.A.Veratre

She looked at the paper and read the letter once more before folding it and placing it back in the envelope. Then she took it out and read it again because she could not accept that these were Liam's last words to her. She was sure there was more to it. She paced around the room as she tries to decipher his letter.

"That man loves playing with words..." she sighed heavily and shook her head when she realised it. She took a pen and paper and dissected Liam's note word by word and then letter by letter. She felt dejected when she couldn't find any. Rebecca was always hopeful but at the moment she felt defeated, and all she could do was lean on the desk and cover her face with her hands, the universal gesture for "I can't think of anything else".

"Why can't you just stay with me Liam?" she pleaded the night.

"Because he is a *traveler*," said a voice from behind her who broke her from her reverie. Rebecca was startled by the sudden interjection of the woman standing in the doorway. She was tall and

composed. Her pale blonde hair falls freely in front of her bosom and her loose curls bounce gracefully when she moves. Her misty grey eyes scrutinised every inch of Rebecca, and she somehow found herself doing the same.

The woman inched closer to her when she reached to touch her cheeks. Her fingers were cold when she brushed her cheekbone but Rebecca did not stir. She also wore the same wristlet ornament Rebecca wears on her wrist but it only emanated a subtle glow. She leaned closer and kissed Rebecca, slowly and exhaling every breath. Rebecca strangely found herself respond to the movement of her lips.

“Aha! A taste of Life,” the woman said as Rebecca took a step back, realising who the woman is. The woman evoked her excruciating memories and tortured her mind with scenes from Liam’s unfaithfulness. Right before her eyes, the woman took the form of the red haired woman. Rebecca does not need a second to remember who the woman is. She was the harlot she caught making love to Liam.

“Your people call me Luna,” the woman said as she altered back to her true form, blonde and pale. “Before we have reached your galaxy, our souls have traveled separately from a million light-years away. We were cursed by our people to never meet again but I found him and we will be together again. I have loved him before you. I have loved him longer than you and yet he has chosen to be with you” Luna said as she looked at Rebecca, a cold wild look with a hint of envy glimmered in the woman’s eyes just like the one she saw from her murderers’ faces.

“Where is Liam?” Rebecca demanded.

“Why, Liam is right here,” she said as Liam’s sun shaped locket dangled from Luna’s grip. It emanated a rhythmic bright golden glow. “Tonight, an eclipse will take place. It will free us from the curse and you will die. It’s written in the stars that women like you and beings like him are never meant to be. You don’t...” she was cut off mid-sentence as Rebecca zapped herself at Luna trying to throw her off balance and grab the locket. That was her plan. Plan B would be to run away from her as far as possible.

As soon as she touched the locket, her wristlet tingled and glowed, so did Luna’s. Their wristlet flashed and then the house on top of the hill was empty once again. Rebecca got pulled back into the narrow tunnel and this time it occurred faster, or perhaps she is now getting used to the feeling of being warped. She *fell* on the floor and moaned in pain. She opened her eyes and stood. Once again, Rebecca found herself standing behind the crowd of the chanting monks in the monastery’s assembly hall. But this time, the Dalai lama was no longer amongst them.

She realised that her palm was getting warmer and there it was, she was clutching onto the other half of Liam’s golden sun shaped locket. She examined this side of the locket and etched on the surface was Liam’s secret. Her heart beat quickened at her sudden realisation. Rebecca just realised what his name meant.

L. A. VERATRE is an anagram for A TRAVELER and that his full name:

LIAM A. VERATRE

is an anagram for

I AM A TRAVELER

She silently laughed to herself and shook her head because all this time, Liam told her who he is. The locket didn't glow as it used to. She lost him. Just as she turns to leave the assembly hall, to face the fate that awaits her in the corridor, she heard someone call out her name *again...*

***** by James

Rebecca turned around to the direction of the voice that called her, and there he stood, in the semblance of a demi-god, his holiness, Dalai Lama. *"Come my child, come."* His mouth wasn't moving, but she could hear his voice in her head. She gestured towards his outstretched hand, moving in a nearly wild rush, but he disappeared just as she was about to touch him. *"Meet me in your chambers, and make sure no one is following you."* His voice echoed inside her head. She scanned the area to see if he was somewhere around, and then she saw them, Joe and Eda, their eyes glowed in a scarlet definition of death as they approached her. She knew what they were coming for, the other half of Liam's Locket, (And of course her life!) She took to her heels, diving straight into the first chamber of the monastery; they were right behind her, picking up their momentum too. She took a sharp bend to the left, headed towards Kevin's inventory room, she planned to hide there until the danger was clear, then; she would go to her chamber to meet with Dalai Lama.

Another bend to the left placed her directly in front of the inventory room, she twisted the door knob and—click; it opened. She took her spot, right behind the lockers, she could barely fit in, but she managed. This was her secret place, this was where she had hid when she didn't want to be found years ago, it was twenty five years since she last came here, and was surprised the place hadn't changed a bit.

She heard the door crack open, *"Hiding here was a mistake!"* she mused.

"Where did she go?" She heard Eda ask.

"Definitely not here, see, the room is empty." The voice that replied belonged to Kevin.

She gasped; Kevin was part of them too!

"Let's do a quick search, in case she is hiding here, you can never tell." Joe said.

She felt like screaming for help, she knew what would happen if they found her, Luna had made it clear, she would be killed, and Liam, her sweet Liam would never be rescued. She tried to come out of hiding and dash for the door before they found her, but as she made the first move, the voice in her head returned. *"Patience child, be patient."* She paused. She could feel someone approaching her hiding place, she could hear the footsteps, it was coming closer and closer; but then, someone spoke.

"Her mother, yes, perfect! let's go and get Samantha, when Rebecca knows we've got her mother, she would come to us, and then, we would hand her and the locket over to Luna."

She gasped once more, covering her mouth with her hands.

"Nice idea Joe, Nice idea." Kevin said.

She could hear the footsteps fade away and then, with a brash racket, the door closed.

She came out from hiding, and made for the door, she twisted the door knob and pulled in—locked! The door had been bolted from outside.

"You can pass through that door without opening it," The voice in her head said. "Hold on to the locket and create a vision of you passing through that door."

"This must be crazy," She thought, and closed her eyes. She could feel the warmth in her palms as she held on tight to the locket. She felt as light as a leaf and it looked like she was breezing through space, then as fast as it started, everything stopped.

She opened her eyes, and was startled to see herself standing outside the inventory chambers. "Why can't I do this and appear in my chamber?" she asked, hoping to get a reply from the voice.

"Hurry child, run!"

She obeyed; moving as one controlled by a higher authority, straight to her chamber, Dalai Lama was waiting.

She burst into the ambiance of her room, and there he was, seated in the only chair in her chamber, Dalai Lama.

"What is all these about," she found herself asking. "How come you know about all that is happening?"

"There is no time to explain, child. Your friend Eda and her father Joe have been possessed by the worst of the travelers, Kavin too have been possessed and you must save them all, you must, my child."

"I don't understand you," Rebecca replied. "These people are trying to kill me, they've got my mother!"

"I know that too, somehow, Luna was able to take along her evil followers whilst she was banished, Liam had no choice, he was framed by Luna and together they were both banished by the council of elders of the first order of our planet, Pandora."

"Wait, slow down... did I hear you say 'Our Planet'?" she asked, taking a step back.

"Yes, I too am from Pandora, I am a passenger traveler, the keeper of the gates of Pandora, I have possessed the body of your Dalai Lama and I am here to help you stop Luna's evil plot, for if she succeeds in breaking the curse, Pandora will face its destruction."

"So why am I in all these? Why me?"

"Liam's love for you was genuine, something Luna couldn't get from him, and so she captured him when she finally spotted his signal rays from earth and then she created the illusion you saw, that moment, when you saw Liam making love to Luna, it was all a lie!"

Rebecca fell to her knees. For years, a part of her had hated Liam for cheating on her, now, some traveler from 'Pandira' or whatever the name was, was telling her Liam was innocent! She felt ashamed for ever believing her Liam would cheat on her.

"How do I get Liam back," She asked, standing up to her feet and resolved to fight. "And my mother, how do I get my mother back too?"

“As we speak, the travelers in your friends have taken your mother to the Limbo of Asgard, you must pass through the portal of the enchanted light and confront Luna; you must defeat her and retrieve the other half of the locket, then and only then would your mother and friends be free of the travelers in them.”

“And Liam, what about Liam?”

“You must bring the two parts of the locket to me before the eclipse; I will join it back with the sacramental creed and release Liam from his prison.”

She turned around to leave, holding the locket in her palm firmly.

“You must remember, in the Limbo, you can all things, your power will be without limit, as long as that locket is with you.”

Rebecca closed her eyes and held the locket even firmer as she felt the warmth in her palms, she was wafting through space, and when she opened her eyes, she was standing once again before the door of the enchanting light. She paused for a while, looking at the locket in her palm, then, with a deep breath, she strolled through the Enchanting Light.

***** by Moses

The woman looked at Rebecca as she squinted her eyes and stared right into the light bulb next to her bed. Rebecca babbled for quite some time about Luna and Pandora, about how the Dalai Lama was the only one who could save the planet from the invasion.

The junior doctor too stared at Rebecca through the huge glass window with utter amazement; sure he had seen patients with schizophrenia but none with such vivid hallucinations. She clutched a piece of the pillow cover that she had managed to tear away and called it her necklace, one that Liam had given her.

He furiously took down notes, jotting down all the characters she had spoken of during her recital of what was new in her life and how she felt currently, standard questions that were asked to all the patients in the asylum to get an idea of what their thought processes were and how to use past memories, ones that they could recollect correctly to use in their treatment.

“Anna”, he called as he patted the shoulder of the woman along with him. Anna looked at the doctor, tears welling up in her eyes.

Anna was the chief matron at the asylum and as protocol required, she never got too close with her patients, but Rebecca was an exception. Never once did she throw a tantrum, never misbehave or have a violent streak like the others but her hallucinations were the worst.

She remembered how Rebecca first came into the hospital, armed with a bevy of policemen. The police had found her in a pool of blood, of her so called husband Liam, Uncle Joe and Eda's. She kept muttering as to how Liam cheated on her with a red headed woman, evidence of which wasn't found by the police and the accusation that Uncle Joe and Eda were responsible for killing Liam, that she was being framed by the inhabitants of Pandora since she knew their secret, which was to take control over the planet.

Anna waited for her to calm down, since she knew that after these intense hallucinations, Rebecca became mentally tired and turned relatively calmer. She tried to inspect the wound on Rebecca's forehead, one that was caused by hitting her head hard to the edge of the steel bed.

“Are any of the characters in the story true?” the junior doctor questioned Anna. She sighed and narrated her case history, one that had baffled her, kept her occupied and prodded her to learn more about her ailment in the past two years.

Rebecca was an intelligent and attractive woman; she had an extreme fondness towards literature and had read all the classics. She sacrificed the bigger opportunities that were offered to her and worked as a book editor at a small publishing company at Surrey, so that she could live close to her mother. Samantha, Rebecca's mother had raised her as a single parent, taught her to be self-sufficient but kept her protected under her watchful eye, away from any man who would try to charm and take her. Rebecca had a few incidents during her childhood when she blanked out for a few hours, during which no one knows what had happened to her or what she did.

It was when Rebecca met Liam on one of her assignments at London that things started going downhill. Being a con artist, he managed to charm her and sweep her off her feet, within hours. She started lying and made excuses of meeting him and turned possessive. Her illness intensified when

she kept forcing Liam to marry her because she got pregnant, much against the advice of her well-wishers like Uncle Joe and Eda.

On one fateful day, while Samantha was out buying groceries, Liam had come to meet her, to end things with her, once and for all, unfortunately at the very same time that Uncle Joe and Eda had come to meet her to drill sense into her. No one knows what happened next, apart from the fact that her neighbors reported to the police of loud shrieks and screams from her house when she refused to open the doors to them.

Rebecca got bail under the condition that she would undergo treatment at a mental clinic because she suffered from multiple personality disorder and schizophrenia while being under the care of her mother. But Samantha had seen enough tragedy for a lifetime, being a single parent had taken a toll on her health and looking after her mad daughter who had slipped into depression post the miscarriage of her child seemed like an impossible task, so she distanced herself.

The junior doctor still amazed noted down the story as Anna narrated as well as the little antics of Rebecca, ones that she had shown in the past hour and a half. What surprised him was her ability to narrate her hallucination in painfully intricate detail, including the color of the eye of the people she saw in her episodes.

The junior doctor smiled, satisfied that he had one incredible case to work on while Anna waited for Rebecca to sleep so that she could nurse the wound on her forehead and set her white messy room into order. She saw the upturned bed, torn pillow, the water that she had spilled on the floor, and the picture of Dalai Lama that she clutched in her fist and silently prayed, to save Rebecca from her own destructive self.

***** by Wandering Story teller

The rain started with huge droplets that soon turned into a torrent. The evening deepened and it was dark near the bushes Dr. Hannock usually parked his car. The trees swayed in the wind as every other sound drowned out. The mental asylum was soon a shrieking, quivering mass of dark shadows.

“Typical weather”, muttered Dr. Hannock as he pulled the hood of his raincoat lower and walked briskly around to the driver’s side of the car. He just pulled open the door and got in, making puddles on his seat. There was no need to lock cars or for that matter anything else in this god forsaken place. The engine sprang to life and the headlights could barely illuminate the road ahead but Dr. Hannock knew every curve, every bend, every bush and tree on the road to the asylum dormitory. He had to make the rounds twice daily- from his living quarters in the asylum premises to the dormitory.

As the car braked to a stop, Dr. Hannock pulled out a polaroid camera from the back seat and placed it deep in the recesses of his raincoat. It was a good day to be photographing the ghosts. Slamming the door of the car, he bounded up the steps of the dormitory. Anna, the matron at the mental asylum looked up anxiously. Her wrinkled face showed a nervousness she felt on days like this-when everything turned spooky and unreal. The rain battered down relentlessly on the arches and spires of the Victorian era building turned into an institution for the mentally ill.

Anna had been with the asylum for nearly eight years now. Much longer than Dr. Hannock, who had come in only 8 months earlier. 8 months! she repeated bitterly to herself as she reluctantly got up to escort him to his patient, Rebecca, the petite, pretty woman diagnosed with schizophrenia. When Rebecca was brought in nearly three years ago, she was fragile, ready to go to pieces at the slightest mental trauma. Although as per policy, Anna was supposed to keep her distance and treat the case professionally, yet she developed a maternal attitude towards Rebecca.

Anna worried for Rebecca constantly because of her frequent and vivid hallucinations which grew in intensity over a period of time. Anna began to feel emotionally drained because of her helplessness. Then Dr. Hannock was assigned to Rebecca’s case. A junior doctor, he nevertheless made astonishing progress and Rebecca improved. Her hallucinations subsided. Her health improved and she seemed much stable over a period of just a few months. Anna was thankful and envious...

Both Anna and Dr. Hannock walked in smiling in Rebecca’s high-ceilinged room. The spaciousness lengthened the shadows for the room was seldom well-lit. “Budget cuts”, rued Anna. Rebecca was staring out of the window, looking at... nothing but the rain. Dr. Hannock took out his polaroid and placed it on the table. He whispered a few soothing words to Rebecca to bring her out of her reverie. In spite of that, Rebecca started and turned her reddened eyes towards Anna.

“Anna, tonight is the time I must talk to them, confront them”, said Rebecca in a heavy voice.

“Who do you mean, Rebecca?”, asked a startled Anna. “Them, out there”, said Rebecca wearily. “Liam, my beloved. Luna, my hateful enemy who seduced Liam away from me. My friends, Joe and Eda, who tried to murder me, to take me away from my journey where I wanted to make the golden locket whole again. To free Liam from the curse...to save my mother from the evil travellers from the planet of Pandora.” Rebecca convulsively placed her fingers around her wrist and twisted them, as if holding a bracelet.

Anna darted anxious glances from Rebecca to Dr. Hannock and back again. Why was the doctor not doing anything to calm down Rebecca? Instead, he was fiddling with his Polaroid, taking pictures of the darkened window!! No, it was not just the window but what was beyond it. As the photos developed in front of her eyes, Anna discerned irregular shapes. Shadowy forms! She could not see anything with her naked eyes!

Rebecca traced one shape fondly with her fingers. "Liam", she moaned. Dr. Hannock put his hand on Anna's shoulder. "We need your help", he said hoarsely.

"Are you feeding her hallucinations?", Anna almost shrieked. "Have you been telling her that all that is in her head, all her visions are true?"

"Yes, because it is a truth beyond the timelines we know and the boundaries of life and spirits as we understand." Ignoring the look of horror on Anna's face, he continued. "When I first came here, I treated Rebecca as any other schizophrenia patient. Then I realised that what she remembered may not make sense to you or me trained in modern medicine but to somebody who believed in past lives. As it is, I trained in past life regression before I came to this mental asylum. My mother remembered a lot from her past life and was branded mentally ill. I vowed to become a doctor to cure her. But what I found was that there were many things that could only be explained through delving into the patient's mind and believing her version. Anyway, I have tried past life regression with Rebecca and it works. What she talks about is not a figment of her imagination or the ramblings of a diseased mind. She has lived through all these life incidences."

"She remembers the people whom she encountered in her previous life and on an unfinished mission. And more so, because they are a part of her present life as well. She is an extraordinarily sensitive soul and she was thwarted in her mission. So she would live the cycle of those events till they are resolved."

As Dr. Hannock spoke, Anna looked at Rebecca to see her get out of her bed and towards the window. The sky was lightening. Incredibly, it was still night. Yet the light glowed brightly and Rebecca walked towards it as if in a trance.

***** by Sona

Rebecca, at 40, is no common person. She, for the last 3 years, had lived in the mental asylum. Being deemed crazy.

Over the past years, her charm and glow had worn off. Her cheeks and lost their liveliness and her hair its luster. Her lips were dry and the skin kept peeling off causing blood clots despite Anna's persistent attempts to keep her hydrated enough. Her eyes had sunk to almost inside her eye sockets. Dark circles made things worse. The scars she got from all those times she got wild during an episode of the blast from her past were now a part of her personality.

Dr Hannock, the junior doctor that had come to this asylum only 8 months ago was a little man with mousy hair and a freckled face, was mighty determined for being so little.

He had tried to treat Rebecca like every other patient with schizophrenia. But, what he realised along the way was that she was not mentally ill. She, like his mother, was a tortured and pure soul with unfinished past life businesses. He tried past life regression and kinds of hypnotherapy on her, which all worked very well. But, the progress, was painfully slow. For she responded very erratically.

Rebecca had mixed up her past and present. Especially people from the two lives. Her best friends in her past life had betrayed her, tried to kill her. The love of her life, was from a different world, Liam had been unfaithful to her and cheated on her with the evil spirit of Luna. From his own world she had come to believe that Liam had died. But, one day she went on a search and the events turned her life upside down. For she was sent on a quest to search for Liam and free him from Luna's evil prison by finding the other half of Liam's locket and joining it together.

Dr. Hannock was going to give it one shot tonight. He was going to stretch for as long as he could. He, was a patient man. But, there was only so much he could take. He needed more solid results to know he wasn't wasting time on something that wouldn't work. He had it planned out for her. He wanted her to relive it but only his way this time. The way it would end. He'd already alerted the hospital staff.

But as soon as he had said the word to Anna.
The lights went off.

As she, Rebecca, with the faded asylum gown loosely hanging on her frame, walked through the curtain of light, she changed into a majestic form of herself
She was in a bright blue body hugging full length gown and her eyes had a shine and her cheeks a blush red. Her lips soft.

She was now standing on the beach of the hill, her house was once on.
It was gloomy day with Sun hiding behind the clouds. The sea splashed around violently. The wind so fast, it carried the smell of the sea, speaking to Rebecca, saying things only she could connect to.

She looked down at Liam's Sun locket's half in her hand, concentrating hard to receive a weapon to fight.

For she remembered the Dalai lama's advice, that she'd have unlimited power as far the Sun locket was with her.

She received her weapon.
Somehow, it was the Katropis knife.

She could see the images of what could go wrong and how she could lose the battle for Liam, again.

But then she gathered the courage.

She turned around, walked stoically towards the lone Bunyan tree, she knew the battle would take place at.

The second she stepped there the spirits of Luna and her evil servants arrived.

But since Rebecca knew exactly what was going to happen and how Luna would bring her images and make her disappointment and blind her in rage so she would lose balance and they could grab the locket.

Rebecca was prepared.

So this time, She went straight for it.

She lashed out the knife at Luna's fellow evil spirit that was unprepared and took the lash and fell down.

This only gave Luna and her other fellow evil spirit time to prepare.

They held on to Rebecca from both sides and the knife fell out of her hand.

Rebecca screamed and lashed out in revulsion.

She bit Luna's wrist so hard it started bleeding.

Then, it dawned on Rebecca.

It was two against one, and she'd never win the fight.

So she decided to use Luna's trick of small talk right back on her.

They held on to Rebecca from both sides and the knife fell out of her hand.

Rebecca screamed and lashed out in revulsion.

She bit Luna's wrist so hard it started bleeding.

Then, it dawned on Rebecca.

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So she decided to use Luna's trick of small talk right back on her.

As soon Rebecca started talking, Luna's naive fellow spirit and herself let her loose.

She jumped up at the right opportunity, kicked the sand into their faces, blinding them.

She picked up katropis and without a moment's hesitation drove into to both of them.

She knew, She had only seconds before both of them came back to their senses.

She ripped apart Luna's white gown and found the locket.

When she turned around, She saw the Sun was just about to set.

She had to make it to the Dalai lama In time to save Liam.

So she took both the parts and concentrated hard on reaching wherever he was.

Just then the 1st evil spirit woke up and lashed her.

But her dissipating form only took the scar to the cheek and reached his holiness.

They stood at the monastery.

Her only family, Her mother Samantha. Her best friend's, Uncle Joe and eda. Kavin, the helper.

THE ENCHANTING LIGHT

Only Liam was missing.
And his holiness.
He smiled at her and said she was just in time.
He joined the two parts.
And there was Liam's glowing form walking right out of the curtain with a smile on his face.

When the lights came on
Rebecca had a smile on Her face along with scar she got.

The night had ended for Rebecca on That note. For she had fallen unconscious.

But what Dr Hannock saw after astounded him.
Anna's eyes were possessed with a green glow and within seconds he realised.
That the whole thing had been a false story from Anna.
Anna was possessed with the spirit of Luna.

Now she writhe all over from pain.
And within a few minutes
All that was left of was the matron clothes and hair pins.

Dr Hannock, now knew Rebecca needed no cure.
For she had completed her mission.

*****by Manvi

THANK YOU