

A FAERIE STORY

Written by

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EXT. WOODS - DAY

The woods quiet down as the sun sinks closer to the horizon. It's the middle of spring, and flowers are poking up from the ground and buds grow on the trees. A NIGHTINGALE sings from one of the trees.

LIAM GARDNER, mid 30's, an academic awkward type and his wife SIOBHAN GARDNER, mid 30's, a "free spirit" with a drawn face, are gathering stones and putting them into bags.

Siobhan hums to herself as she also picks flowers up and puts them in her hair.

The following is a poem called "The Stolen Child" by W.B. Yeats

SIOBHAN

Where dips the rocky highland
Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water rats;
There we've hid our faery vats,
Full of berries
And of reddest stolen cherries.

The couple comes to a clearing. They begin to build a circle with the rocks they've collected.

Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of
weeping than you can understand.

The Nightingale calls again. Liam starts collecting sticks for a fire, while Siobhan starts hanging fairy lights in the surrounding low hanging branches.

The two come together in the middle of the circle.

SIOBHAN (CONT'D)

Ready?

LIAM

I think so. Go ahead.

Siobhan pulls a very old, delicate looking WOODEN PAN FLUTE from her bag. She starts to play.

The music starts out soft and lulling before it takes on an ethereal quality. The fire JUMPS as she continues.

LIAM (CONT'D)

I think it's working...

Siobhan keeps playing, the song getting louder, OTHER FLUTES joining in.

A LIGHT BREEZE picks up and blows through the clearing. The last beams of sunlight and the fire illuminate everything with a gold glow.

LIAM (CONT'D)

(whispered)

Siobhan...

Siobhan finishes her song and looks up. On the edge of the stone circle is what looks like a large, oval PORTAL - shimmering like a bubble.

Liam stands next to Siobhan, exchanging excited smiles.

LIAM (CONT'D)

We did it... I can't believe it actually worked.

SIOBHAN

There's still a little magic left after all.

LIAM

You ready?

SIOBHAN

I am. Make sure to grab that horse shoe.

LIAM

Right.

Liam turns away and crosses the clearing and picks up a large iron HORSESHOE.

When he turns back around, Siobhan is GONE and so is the PORTAL.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Siobhan? Hello?

Scared and small, Liam is utterly alone in the clearing. But not in the shadows.

A FAIRY stands, its antlers silhouetted against the tree line. Liam stares, dumfounded.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Where is she? Who are you?

The Fairy speaks, his voice echoing all around.

FAIRY
Who are you that thinks you have the right to summon us?

LIAM
Please, we have a daughter, we didn't even know if this would work...

FAIRY
Do not tamper then with things you do not understand. Until you have a boon to offer in return, you will not see us again.

LIAM
A boon? What do you want? I'll give it to you!

FAIRY
One of equal value to you as the woman you seek to reclaim.

LIAM
I can't trade another person!

FAIRY
So be it.

The Fairy melts into the forest, leaving Liam alone and panicked.

LIAM
Wait, hold on. Come back! Hello?

Liam cries out in frustration and anguish, causing the Nightingale to fly away.

He destroys the stone circle, then comes back to the horseshoe. He picks it up and rests his forehead against it and weeps.

INT. GARDNER HOUSE - IVY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

IVY, 6 and sleeping comfortably in bed, is awoken suddenly when her father opens her bedroom door and sits on the edge of her bed.

Ivy sits up and YAWNS.

IVY
Daddy? You're home already?

LIAM
Ivy sweetheart, I have some bad news.

IVY
What is it?

LIAM
Mamma is gone.

IVY
Where'd she go?

LIAM
I'm going to find her, I promise.
No matter what it takes.

IVY
Mamma's gone?

LIAM
Mamma got taken by the fairies,
Ivy.

IVY
No! We have to get her back!

LIAM
I'm going to, I promise. Whatever
it takes.

Ivy starts to snivel. Liam pulls something out of his pocket.
It's the HORSESHOE.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Keep this. It'll keep you from
getting taken, too.

IVY
Why did the fairies take her? What
do they want?

LIAM
Fairies are dangerous, Ivy. They do
what they want and explain
themselves to no one. But they're
scared of iron, ok? So always keep
this horseshoe with you.

IVY
Ok, Daddy.

Liam plants a quick kiss on Ivy's forehead. Ivy goes to throw
her arms around Liam but he's already off the bed.

LIAM
I'll get her back.

IVY
I love you, Daddy.

Liam smiles and turns away from Ivy before the tears come
down his face.

CUT TO:

TWELVE YEARS LATER

INT. IVY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

IVY, now 22 with colored hair and bright eyes with bags under
them, wakes up to her alarm at 7:00 am. Without missing a
beat, she hits the button and rolls out of bed.

She puts on athleisure wear that's laid out on an old chair
in the corner of her room. She moves on auto-pilot to the...

KITCHEN

Ivy pulls out a pre-packed lunch from her fridge, one of five
already in there. She turns around and throws on an OLD WIND
BREAKER, grabs her keys, and is out the door.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Ivy has several dogs on leashes, some bigger ones in front of
her and some smaller ones behind her. She takes a right turn
and all the dogs obey. Everything about the uniformity of the
move screams ROUTINE.

INT. SHOE STORE - DAY

In the same outfit only with a company button up on, Ivy sits down and helps a KID put on a shoe.

The kid struggles to get their foot into the shoe, and Ivy makes a FACE as her thumb is SMOOSHED by the kid's heel.

INT. PIZZA PARLOR - NIGHT

Ivy is now wearing ANOTHER t-shirt, this time one that says "PIZZA PARLOR" on it and stands at the hostess stand. It's BUSY, with people loudly chatting in the waiting area and several big TV's blare sports broadcasts.

ROSE, 22 and dressed business casual, walks up to the hostess stand.

ROSE

Pick up for Robertson.

Ivy comes out from behind the stand and gives Rose a quick kiss while also giving her a pizza box and salad.

IVY

Please don't eat all of it this time, I didn't eat lunch today.

ROSE

Should have thought of that before you got a medium instead of a large. Oops!

Rose turns around and Ivy shoves her on her way playfully.

ROSE (CONT'D)

See you at your place!

IVY

I'm serious about the pizza!

As Ivy watches Rose leave, she sees a WOMAN staring at her through the glass door. She looks like she just left a Grateful Dead show back in the 70's.

Ivy gets preoccupied for a moment and grabs some menus for a waitress. When she looks back up, the Woman is crossing the street.

EXT. IVY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Ivy approaches her apartment building, one that's clearly seen better days, some of the windows are boarded up, but a few have AC window units to show that people do actually live there.

There's a package for her outside the door. It's small but heavy and has no return address.

She hears SCUFFING from behind her, like someone dragging their feet. She turns around, but no one's there. She struggles briefly with her keys and hurries inside.

She's too distracted to notice the LITTLE VINES growing up and around the spindles of her bike wheels.

INT. IVY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Ivy walks in the door and sees Rose sitting at the small kitchen table with dinner laid out before her. Uneaten.

ROSE

See? I didn't even start yet.

IVY

Isn't the food cold?

Ivy drops the package at the front door as she walks in to give her girlfriend a kiss.

ROSE

I put it in the oven, so no. Salads went in the fridge.

IVY

Impressive.

Ivy takes her jacket off and takes the glass of wine Rose gives her.

ROSE

I learned how to be a good girlfriend.

IVY

Finally!

They laugh, but Rose looks at Ivy like she's got more to say.

ROSE

Speaking of growing and learning, do you think you could do the same?

IVY
What do you mean?

ROSE
I mean, do you think you could move
in with me? Or at least seriously
consider it?

Ivy sighs. This isn't the first time this conversation has
been had.

IVY
I have seriously considered it, are
you seriously ambushing me with
this right after I walk in the
door?

ROSE
I thought a surprise attack might
work better, since having a
rational conversation hasn't
worked.

IVY
I'm not ready. I like being on my
own.

ROSE
You're awfully clingy whenever I'm
around.

IVY
I'm not clingy.

ROSE
For someone who likes being on
their own you are.

Ivy rolls her eyes and starts eating. Rose reaches across the
table and takes Ivy's fork out of her hand.

IVY
Seriously?

ROSE
I need to know why you aren't
ready. Because right now, it feels
like you're trying to keep me at
arms length and for the life of me
I can't understand why.

Ivy leans over the table, fighting back.

IVY

You can't understand why? Take a second and think about it. I've been living on my own for years.

ROSE

That wasn't by choice Ivy.

IVY

Doesn't matter.

ROSE

I'm not some stranger who has a room for rent on Craigslist, you love me. You do love me, right?

IVY

Of course I do.

ROSE

But not enough to move in with me.

IVY

Not yet. I'm not saying never, but not yet.

They sit in silence, Rose heartbroken, Ivy shut off. Ivy eats her pizza in silence. Rose slowly starts to eat hers, the tension still hanging in the air between them like a cloud.

But Rose isn't one to let something fester.

ROSE

So, why'd you have to skip lunch today?

Ivy smiles at Rose as she takes a bite of her pizza.

IVY

I had to help a woman try on six different pairs of shoes, sometimes with two different sizes.

ROSE

People suck.

IVY

Yes they do.

INT. IVY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ivy lies awake in bed, Rose next to her sound asleep. Ivy stares at her, the longing to just let Rose in evident on her face, but the fear is there also.

Unable to sit with her thoughts any longer, Ivy gets up, careful not to disturb Rose.

As Ivy leaves the room, Rose cracks open her eyes and gives a concerned look.

INT. IVY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ivy goes to the fridge and pours herself a glass of milk. Her eyes go to her package, still unopened.

She brings it over to the kitchen table and looks at it closely. No return address, that's weird, and no printed label. She rips the tape off and opens the box.

Inside is an old, iron horseshoe. There's a note in an envelope with her name on it. She recognizes the hand writing, and her face drops with dread.

IVY (CONT'D)

Dammit Dad.

She puts the note unopened back into the box with the horseshoe and puts it on the ground. She takes a sip of milk and rests her head on the table.

INT. GARDNER HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

A 16 year old Ivy stands in the foyer with two suitcases and a few duffle bags. Tear tracks stain her cheeks. She goes into...

LIAM'S STUDY

Liam sits at his desk with an old, large book in front of him. Several more like it are littered around the room, as well as loose sheets of papers piled up everywhere. In every corner of the room hangs a horseshoe.

IVY

Dad?

Nothing.

IVY (CONT'D)

(louder)

Dad.

Liam doesn't look up from his reading.

LIAM

Yes?

IVY
I'm leaving.

LIAM
I'll see you later.

Ivy struggles from the doorway, fighting off anger and anxiety at the same time. Does she really have to spell it out for him?

IVY
No, you won't.

LIAM
No?

IVY
No. I'm not coming back.

Liam finally looks up from his book, seeing his daughter trembling in the doorway. He sees the bags in the foyer behind her.

He turns back to his book.

LIAM
I'll come find you when I get your mother back.

Ivy can't take it anymore.

IVY
She's not coming back, Dad, she left. She left you, end of story.

LIAM
That's not true.

IVY
It is! It is but you won't accept it! You've been obsessed with fairies. FAIRIES Dad!

LIAM
You don't know anything about it.

IVY
I don't have to! She's gone. Move on.

LIAM
If you want to give up on this family, then go. I won't stop you.

Ivy can't find anything else to say, frozen in fury. Fresh tears roll down her red face and she turns from the study back into the foyer.

From Liam's desk, we see her aggressively grab all her things and barge out the door, not looking back.

Liam continues reading, but a tear escapes his eye.

INT. IVY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Ivy jolts awake when she hears the door buzzer ringing. She sees a sticky note in front of her from Rose, reading: "I'll be at my place until you change your mind."

Ivy groans and smacks her head on the table. The buzzer sounds again. Ivy gets up and stretches her back and smooths her hair before getting the door.

INT/EXT. IVY'S APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Ivy opens the door and sees ELAINE, a woman in her late 30's dressed in a blazer and slacks. She has a briefcase in one hand and a manila folder in another.

IVY
Can I help you?

ELAINE
Are you Ivy Gardner?

IVY
Yes, who's asking?

ELAINE
My name is Elaine, I'm here to discuss the contents of your father's will.

IVY
I don't... wait his will?

Elaine looks a bit confused.

ELAINE
Ms. Gardner, you are aware of your father's passing, aren't you?

Ivy stands frozen in the doorway.

ELAINE (CONT'D)

May I come in? It seems we have a lot to discuss.

Ivy steps aside and lets Elaine in.

Before she closes the door, she sees vines have now completely covered her bike.

ELAINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Ms. Gardner?

Ivy closes the door, reeling.

INT. LIVING AREA - DAY

Elaine and Ivy sit opposite each other on Ivy's couch, several files splayed out on the coffee table.

Ivy has a cup of coffee in her hands that is full and has long gone cold. Elaine takes a sip of her own.

ELAINE

Do you need me to repeat anything? I know it's a lot to take in. I apologize, I didn't realize the extent of your separation from your father. Otherwise I would have been more sensitive.

IVY

No, it's alright. He's basically been dead to me for six years. A heart attack was just what made him dead to everyone else.

ELAINE

There is something else I'm assuming then you don't know about.

IVY

What?

ELAINE

Were you ever made aware that your father had another child?

Ivy balks, the mug dropping from her hands and spilling all over the couch. Ivy jumps up.

IVY

I'm sorry, here let me get some paper towels.

Ivy runs to the kitchen (it's an open floor plan) and Elaine continues talking.

ELAINE

Based on her information, it seems your father was left with her after the mother dropped her off at his home.

Ivy returns to the couch and starts cleaning but her gaze is vacant.

IVY

How old is she?

ELAINE

Five.

Ivy stops scrubbing. She stands up and starts pacing.

IVY

Five. FIVE? So he moved on as soon as I was out of the picture. Replaced the old family with a new one? That's just...

Ivy laughs and sits on the ground.

ELAINE

I understand the situation is a lot, so prepare yourself for it to get even more...

IVY

Insane?

Elaine takes a sip of coffee.

ELAINE

I came here initially to discuss the details of his will as you are the sole beneficiary listed. You've been left...well everything.

IVY

What does everything mean?

ELAINE

All his wealth and assets, including his home, research, and his daughter.

IVY

He left his daughter to me in his will?

ELAINE

It's not as strange as it sounds, you are her next of kin.

IVY

And he left it all to me.

ELAINE

Yes. It's interesting actually, he had this will created only a week ago.

IVY

...and he left everything he owns to me?

ELAINE

Again, yes. Now in terms of the child, you are legally old enough to be her guardian, however if you cannot provide for her and keep her safe and healthy, she will be taken into the custody of the state.

IVY

What's her name?

Elaine rummages through the papers on the coffee table and finds a file in a red folder. She hands it to Ivy.

In it is a picture of a girl holding a bunny, looking down at the floor.

ELAINE

Maisie. All her information is in that file. I encourage you to look it over.

Elaine stands up and gathers her things.

ELAINE (CONT'D)

This is a lot to digest, I'm well aware. I'll come back tomorrow to touch base and answer any questions you have. Thank you for the coffee.

IVY

Can I meet her first? Before I make a decision?

ELAINE

Of course. I can bring her with me tomorrow if that's alright?

IVY

Sure.

Elaine walks up to Ivy and puts a hand on her shoulder.

ELAINE

Just breath, you'll see your way through this, one way or another.

IVY

Thank you.

Elaine gives the shoulder an encouraging squeeze before exiting the apartment.

Ivy stares at the picture, then closes the folder and drops it on the coffee table. She turns around and starts calling someone on her phone. She grabs her coat and keys and is out the door.