

## Ablation of the Carnal Bond

The door was there looming over me, as it always was, rudely staring back in its taunting demeanor. It stood tall against its frame, cracked oak wood, ancient black knob and still always staring at me, that door. Within the first few months of my incarceration, the door very quickly began to take a strong disliking to me, writhing at the very sight of me, puckering its wooden face in disgust, refusing to ever level with me and look me in the eyes. It resented the way I'd desperately stretch my weak arms toward it, longing for the freedom that lay just beyond.

**I hated that door as much as it hated me.**

But tonight was different, because tonight, that old oak door had been left unlocked.

The worn door wasn't just scowling as it usually did, judging my pathetic fragile state and counting the days I had left to live, secretly wishing it could shorten those days and just flatten me, pin my frail body against the wood planks below, the planks who had also grown resentful of my tears that stained them every night. The door wanted to break free off its hinges, abruptly slam down and crush my body, stain the floorboards red with my blood and put me out of my torment so it could be free of listening to the never ending sounds of my desperate wails that imprinted its wooden frame like years imprint rings on stumps, like screaming parents imprint a scared child listening to the violent voices booming above their head.

The door wanted to kill me because it simply seemed to have no other choice, my endless crying driving it mad. I didn't blame the door, as I too wanted to die, but I did think it rude for its hurtful way of thinking and how little compassion it seemed to have for me. *I'm a person too, you know*, despite how it may have come to look in my decrepit state.

Occasionally the door would sputter an insane spitting of, "*shut up!*" and, "*Quiet! Please!*" erupting only when it had completely lost its ability to hold its proud, silent manner any longer.

The door rarely shouted, priding itself in a dutiful and solemn muteness but there were occasions, especially on days like these, where it lost its grip and would lash out sharply at me, stifling my wails into choking sobs and desperate gasps for air. The door would then immediately resent me for causing it to lose its composure and it'd mumble quietly to itself before once again attempting to regain its stern sense of silent dignity.

But tonight, the looming oak door was not silent and glaring or bitterly muttering at me, huffing under its breath, as it usually did.

**Tonight, the door was screaming.**

I could hear it like my heart had ears. I wasn't sure how long it had been since my heart had developed this ability to hear, but sure enough, every hard thump in my chest perpetuated the sound of the door as it howled a low, vibrato growl that shook me to my core and sent vibrations through my face and palms.

*Was I just shaking because of the hunger?*

No. It couldn't be.

*Of course not.*

I knew hunger well, too well. We had been acquainted over the past few months, maybe even an entire year now-- why, that would make us more like friends, hunger and I, wouldn't it? Yes, starvation and I were friends, not just acquaintances and for this reason, I knew this intense shaking and rumbling was something different than hunger entirely.

Hunger had never shook me like an earthquake, rattling the cuffs that melded me with this pole, this thick metal pole that had grown to be my lover on lonely nights. Hunger didn't scream like all the forces of the earth, telling me freedom lay just on the other side and I had better make the best of the situation and leave *tonight* so it'd never have to see my face again. I had learned to trust myself and the strange abilities that came from my own personal derangement through months of torture and isolation.

If the door was screaming at me, I knew very well, the door was in fact screaming at me.

**Maybe you couldn't understand that.**

*Of course you couldn't.*

You haven't spent months alone, with nothing to do but reach and reach and reach and **reach** until you stretch enough to leave a room without actually ever moving your body. *Did you know you could do that?* I could do it. I did it whenever I could muster the energy. It was easy for me now, to split off into another place.

I had become two.

I was not one, *I was two*, simultaneously.

This I was sure.

A part of me was not physical. I was not always bound to this earth or to my intense pain which had become my normal state. I searched and searched for a way to get as far away from the physical self as I could, until one day, all at once, a part of me had indeed become free from the useless body that lay slumped in solitude, shackled and chained.

It simply hurt too much to look at her, the physical part of me, laying there helpless on the floor, chained in the middle of an empty room. I liked the physical part of me much less than

this other non-physical version of me that could leave my prison almost at will. My body had become so shriveled, and weak and dependent on **him** to bring food in order to continue living and such sustenance typically came at a horrific price. The torture I endured day in and out was unbearable, so I'd found a way to leave whenever he came.

This other version of me, the one that was born from stretching and reaching, the one that was not chained to this physical plane, was free. It did not feel its friend hunger stab it incessantly in the stomach like a mad woman with a knife or the headaches that pounded my head with a sledgehammer from dehydration. It didn't experience the abuse that came with **him**.

I wasn't completely sure when this second version of myself came about into existence, I only knew that it derived from months of silence, torture and continual

stretching,

stretching,

**stretching.**

I couldn't be exactly sure when the line was crossed, but at some point a few months ago the transformation had been made.

**I was more ethereal than I was carnal.**

My spirit spent most of her time far away, in silent and dark forests. Watching deer graze peacefully and burying herself into dark, moist soil. Relaxing into the underground, cozying up with the worms, swallowing pieces of small pebble, letting the black beetles that dug into the ground, where she lay, crawl all over her etheric body. She liked the way their tiny black legs tickled across her nose and she'd lick their salty underbellies from time to time. She made peace with the worms that squirmed into her eyes and out her ears. She savored the dark grainy soil she devoured, filling her up with a pleasant, soft, fullness.

My spirit flew over every continent and marveled at endless rainy, green, rolling fields. It felt the rain and became wet and slippery and free falling. It swallowed clouds. It was the breeze that blew past a woman's long red hair, relishing in her confused stare as the woman sensed a difference in this breeze, noting a certain eerie aspect of consciousness to it. My spirit soaked up the delicious sun like the sweetest type of grapefruit juice and basked in the healing rays of the moonlight, lapping it's luminescent rays up like a medicine.

She'd put colorful shells from the sea in her mouth and taste the sand and would drown herself in icy cold waves of the ocean and pretend to pass fully to this other side, pretend to know what it'd be like not to be tethered to another version of herself that for the longest time now, held only pain and sorrow and longing. She wanted so badly to be free of that version,

which was only suffering, which was less her now than she was as this new and brilliant ethereal being.

In this form I *knew* the earth, was the earth, was everything in existence.

My spirit began looking for a passageway into some other realm within the cosmos, a type of door she could enter that would, once and for all, completely sever the carnal bond.

Whenever my friend hunger came unannounced, knocking, banging at my door, ripping and tugging my spirit back into my body, I'd both watch and experience this ethereal self of mine, flying, desperately *zooming* up into the sky, past the exosphere, as far as she could into the endless darkness of space, desperately putting as much distance as possible between itself and the pains of mortality that threatened to yank it back to physical consciousness at any second. But in the end I'd always lose the tug of war and be slammed back.

Back to this life.

Back to this strange, foreign body of mine.

Back to pain.

I wondered when the chord that connected my spirit to my body would ever break and I'd truly be left free, roaming the expansiveness of the eternities, drifting into darkness, becoming the darkness, safe forever.

On one venture into the ethereals, I had desperately launched into the vastness of space and had finally found something that surely held the answer to my search for the eternal passageway that I had so desperately ached for. There, dazzling, incredible—suspended among the blackness that surrounded an infinite amount of stars, stood a giant sparkling black marble door, its magnetism to me as powerful as a black hole, just hovering there in space.

Behind the door came the muffled sounds of angelic singing, like millions of Christmas bells twinkling in unison.

It was bright white light in my chest.

It felt like infinity.

It felt like God.

My spirit could feel my body shedding a tear. I was careful not to get yanked back. All along, this stretching and pulling away from pain and toward freedom had led my soul to this magnificent, breathtaking door. I knew with every piece of me, the black marble door was my freedom.

Blinding white lights protruded from out the bottom and edges of the door. I'd tried to get in, but the body always pulled me back and no matter what my spirit did, the door would not

open and the body would become too loud and I'd be sucked back to the silver metal pole and the tear stained floorboards and the judgemental, ancient wooden door.

Suddenly, I was sure, the oak door resided in the dimension of Hell.

My thoughts had wandered too much outside of the room. I had to gain my composure quickly before **he** came in, which would surely be any minute. So now it was my turn to scream at the door that was beginning to make my head throb with its booming, vibrating yelling. It would certainly give me away. This was my chance to break free of this place and I would not let it's haunting wailing break my focus or alert the demon that tortured and fed me to my plans of escape.

*"Shut up!"* I screeched at it, my throat hoarse and my lungs burning.

*"Please, shut up, he'll hear you!"* I mustered the last bit of my strength to shout at the blaring oak door again, but relentlessly, it continued its horrible screaming. I needed it to be quiet so **he** wouldn't suspect my plan. If he heard the door, he would surely know.

I rolled over on my side and reminded myself gently that when **he** opened the door and when **he** undid my cuffs, I would catch him by surprise and run out the door that was always locked but tonight, was not.

I'd run.

And I'd find the outside and I'd be free.

Finally, free.

I'd go see the continents of the world in person, in the flesh. I'd travel to forests and greet the darkness like the friend it'd become. I'd cry in crowds of people and tell them that doors can talk and that hunger is a person and that you can fly if only you focus and stretch...

*Did you know you could fly?*

I had to tell people.

I'd put rocks from the sea into my mouth and taste the Earth like my spirit had and I'd swim in the cold ocean, but I wouldn't drown myself and pretend to die, because I'd live.

I'd live.

**I'd actually live.**

Too soon in the middle of these thoughts, I jumped as **he** opened the back door. I jolted up to meet his gaze, frozen, heart beating like a rabbit's in a trap. His eyes were dark and beedy, like a vulture, like a bug that ate my flesh whenever it pleased with only a look. He ate my flesh, he ate my soul. Blood poured from his mouth that always gaped open, always *hungry hungry* for my moaning, my pain. The devil himself was hungrier for my pain than I, a

chained woman on the brink of starvation, was for food. I could see him more with ethereal vision now than physical eyes.

**Soul Eater. He was a Soul Eater.**

As he walked inside the room, closer to me, he crushed skulls beneath his feet. I could see them there plainly, white and fragile, that's why he seemed to float. He walked on hundreds of skulls and mine would soon be under his feet for another deranged, entrapped woman to see. His long silky black coat trailed behind him, leaving trails of oil and tar on the floorboards, though they did not dare resent him. He reeked of vinegar and burnt hair and he tasted like ash and irony blood and hot salty sweat.

Always too salty he tasted.

The ancient door, still unlocked, had abruptly stopped screaming upon **his** entering, the door's master had arrived. It fell silent-- more silent than I think it had ever been in all my long months held captive in this suffocating hell. The door was watching me, waiting to see if I really would make this final escape. It seemed frozen, holding its breath.

*Silence.*

**He** stood for longer than he normally would in the back doorway, staring at me as if he could read my thoughts. Normally he'd rush in like a starving vampire, fingers quickly undoing his belt, ignoring my pleas, my screams. Instead he had only moved a few feet closer to me, floating, crushing skulls, after closing the door. He stopped to stare me down, eyes as cold as ice. Maybe he had heard the door screaming. Maybe the door had told him it was unlocked!

Of course it had!

**He knew.**

The door had been on his side all along. I never had a chance. I began to weep uncontrollably.

At this sight of my crying **he** moved forward impulsively, the demon with the beetle, ice, vulture eyes, his long black coat still trailing the floor behind him, his black leather boots swiftly moving toward where I lay. There was something different about him tonight, he seemed more focused than ever. I moved my gaze from his shadowy demeanor and kept my eyes on the floor boards beneath me and mustered everything I had not to look at the door that watched me silently now, still holding its breath.

I felt bad for assuming the oak door had betrayed me so hastily.

Perhaps I had a chance yet.

His boots were at my face now and I whimpered as I always did. He bent down and undid my cuffs, one by one. His pale, seemingly translucent hands, cold like a corpse, shocked

my skin with every brushing touch as he wiped away a tear from my face, *almost* compassionately.

A lump grew in my throat.

The cuffs clanked onto the floor.

Like a bolt of lightning, with adrenaline and strength and life I did not know I had, I moved too fast, startling even myself, toward the oak door that stood only a few feet away from me. My heart pounded out of my chest as I staggered like an electrified zombie toward the door. Everything seemed to move in slow motion around me and all I could hear was my breath and my heartbeat. Cold sweat dripped down the side of my face. There were swift movements behind me, but I did not turn to look. My hand was on the ancient doorknob now. And in one motion, I twisted and pulled.

***It opened.***

The door swung, transforming, suddenly no longer a hissing, bitter door but just a normal old door and I stepped over the threshold of Hell to enter freedom, my bare feet hitting the gray carpet just outside the room. This was it. My heart sang as it screamed with adrenaline.

I heard a deafening bang behind me and splinters of wood from the old door whipped across my cheek.

I felt warmth run down my face like a waterfall and a high pitched ringing, that softly,  
softly,

rang,

like angelic singing,

like chimes and bells on Christmas morning.

I fell to the floor.

He stood smirking over my hollow body with just the slightest of crooked smiles, a horrifying smile and I realized as I lay there, in a warm pool of my own blood, that I'd never before seen him smile and it told me, his smile, that **he** had never been alive to begin with. He murmured something barely audible, as the angelic singing, ringing, chiming, grew louder and louder in my head.

"Well, you made it out the door. Good for you," he said, his voice like slime as he shined the black gun in his pale hands with his coat.

"I was hoping you'd at least make it down a couple of hallways. Was planning on having a bit more fun with you my starving little rabbit, but you put up a good fight, girl. I'm proud." He bowed, congratulating my graduation from Hell.

He stepped over me, straddling my limp legs, pulling his long oily, tar coat over my face in a whirl, it encompassed my vision in blackness.

There was the smell of burnt asphalt and just blackness.

Only blackness.

And then **he** was gone, as if he had never been there at all and I was suddenly stepping through a beautiful, black marble door, that blissfully sang, suspended in space.

The blackness became blindingly white.

A sigh of relief.

**Finally.**