

The Lost Girl

by Amber Nair

Bang! Shattered bits of glass and metal flew at me like angry birds. Screams of pain and fear rang out around me. There was a few seconds of light and then darkness. My whole life was there before me, flashing by and engulfing me in its wake. All my memories and nightmares jumbled together were spinning past me. Faster and faster, I kept going round and around until finally everything stopped. Nothing moved. Everything was still and I felt a strange happiness spread over me.

“Arabella” whispered someone from across the room. “Are you awake, dear?” “What”, I tried to say but all that came out was a gasp of air. More boldly I tried to say, “Yes I am awake but where am I?” No words came out and the room was left in eerie silence. I shot up in bed but went straight back down again when I felt the immense pain on the top of my head. What had happened? Looking up, I could see a vaguely familiar ornate golden ceiling that looked like something I had seen at Raby castle. I thought this place was owned by Lord Barnard – why am I lying on the bed? Suddenly, a large group of people flocked in with all kinds of foods that I’d never tried before and intended to keep that way. “Come on dear Lily- Anne, you shall eat something or your mother shan’t be pleased with you, young lady”, spoke the strange lady across the room. “You do want this illness to leave soon, don’t you”? Who were these strange people? What happened? Who am I?

After I had eaten my food and got into my dress, I was told we were going out to the local market not so far away. Although I had just eaten, I felt hollow inside like a bit of driftwood floating along an infinite ocean. Inside the elaborate carriage, there were three other people; one of them I presumed to be a maid or servant and then two other people I did not recognize. The lady had her hair in brown locks tied up, making her head look enormous and a long dress with a tiny waist. The man beside her had long black hair, covered by a hat and a dress-like outfit made of fine silk. The lord and lady of the castle were looking at me with sad, sorrowful eyes that looked like they endured many tearful times. I was racking my brain for answers. Where have I come from? Who was I before this? Why is this happening to me? Out of the blue, a lone tear dripped down my cheek. Why was I crying? “Darling, are you good now”, called out the woman. Wiping back my tears, I nodded a silent reply. There was no use trying to speak.

As we neared the market place, there was a jolt as the horse stopped across the track. “Loreena, will you go and get us our dinner?” asked the man. Nodding politely, the maid left the carriage to get us our dinner. Cold and uninviting, I looked out at the poor maid trying to get through the crowds of rowdy men. Through the corner of my eye, I could see a strange looking girl begging at the side of the road. “Vulgar people”, said mother as she saw what I was looking at, “all they want is our good people’s money”. I felt so sorry for her sitting there with rags for clothes clutching her hand.

It was now one in the afternoon and the woman and man I took to be my parents had gone off to find somebody important and I was left all alone in the middle of the

market. Unsure what to do, I started walking towards the end of the marketplace; anything to get away from the crowds. Bright and dazzling, I looked down to shield my eyes from the glaring sun looking down on me. All of a sudden, I saw her – I saw the strange girl looking into my eyes. I couldn't look away. My eyes locked on a small silver brooch with a small amethyst in the centre, making it impossible to avert my gaze. I couldn't look away from its beauty. That was all it took...

Everything was calm. I sat in the car in between my two twin brothers and mum and dad in front. I was holding the brooch my mother had just given me. "Be careful", she had said, "that one was from a long time ago". I sat there in the car just rolling it over and over in my hands, staring at the small amethyst that made it so stunning. Bang! Shattered bits of glass and metal flew at me like angry birds. Screams of pain and fear rang around me. I could hear police or ambulance sirens coming closer and my mum crying out my name. Without warning, the brooch was knocked out my hands and was flying towards the shattered window. Panicking, I reached out to grab it. There was a few seconds of light and then darkness.

"Ava are you awake honey?" said my real mum's voice. "Your dad is also here in the bed beside you", whispered mum before starting to sob. Across the room, were my mum and a doctor beside her holding a cup of water for me. Was this real? Was I back home? Was I just dreaming? I opened my mouth to test and out came one word, "mum"; I said and then joined her in her tears. The musty, warm smell of the hospital bed brought a smile to my face. I was back.