

FATE

By Sharkchild

Was I the wish of a demented god? Or was I a god? Or was I the pinnacle abhorrer of malformation? My beginnings were not in my memories and my abilities were not in my mind as an aspect of learning—as I existed, so they existed. The only truths within my knowledge flew about like flies in the dark their impacts meaningless and their presences disposable. I was both a witness and judge of the world, though for what matters, I could not grasp.

My earliest recollection of the time and place I inhabited was a lowly candlelit dining room where a gentleman quietly ate of soup with a young daughter. Sounds of serenity permeated the air as a record player sung off the somber notes of images unseen and places unknown. The man's eyes wavered with doubt and distress, and as his daughter looked to him for the smallest sign of comfort, there was none. In the vacancy of such virtue, the girl began to reflect her father, her demeanor and movements falling even more pitiless in reflection.

While watching their restless, sundered spirits coil into the fear of life, a lust for transaction grew uncontrollably. There became within me a howling expectancy that rioted for circumstances I did not understand. And when the internal nightmare overcame what was my consciousness, I stepped into the gross light of the dining pair's sorrow and shown my merciless face. Both the man and child replaced their poses with stains of passionate horror. With disregard for his own daughter, the man tried to run from me, but my reach was too long and my strength was too coarse.

I did not know my purpose or why my purpose ruled me, but my hands became tools and the means of my art; the humans and their inadequacies became my mediums. A picture arose within my mind for each the father and the daughter and with those blueprints of creation, I worked on them violently, detestably, and sufficiently. What they became—what I made them—were minions of redemption. They flailed new arms, defied gravity with new feet, scoured matter with new space, and then I ate them. Slowly, enjoyably, and satisfyingly, I devoured their reborn forms while they screamed. As they joined me in body, my guiles returned and my eyes lightened.

Once the event was complete and my energy was replaced by exhaustion, I sat at the table and mimicked the human character just shortly before portrayed. I ran my fingers along the wood of the table and the coolness of the spoon. I tasted the soup and felt the suffering of existence. I listened intently to the music still playing, and then I vanished.

If I could have seen myself, I might have hesitated in those strange, darkly ingestions that sustained my sanity and fate. I never thought deeply about the lingering whispers of shadow that made my hands and the hollow ruins that led inward to my darkened, soulless eyes. There were many answers, but I did not have any questions.

I manifested many more times after that first memory, feeding on human depravity in the dark corners of societies. It was never in my control, where I went or when I would leave. I would perform my task and then I would be gone.

I had no recollections between my appearances, and so I did not know where I went outside of my art.

With the consistency of my materializations, I began to understand that my doings were a part of something much greater—or more powerful—than myself. These notions in my mind created the first occurrence of curiosity I had ever known. It was then that I once sought, doubted, and dreamed.

There was a woman sleeping in her clothes on a bed when I next arrived from the secret realm of my origins. Makeup was smeared on her face and streaked down from her eyes. Her breathing was short and cold.

Without her being able to flee in fear from my presence, I approached her calmly, standing by her side and staring intently upon her every feature and miniscule shift. I watched her intimately for many moments. In my mind, I saw her image of re-creation, but for the first time, I preferred her the way she was. I thought about her dreams—that perhaps something good lingered in a place where she could not control what did or did not happen.

When the craving came upon me, it was like erratic disgust. My insides thwarted themselves and manipulated my shape into cunning devils of starvation. The vision I held of the woman began to haunt me and seduce me into the process of my art. I strained to prolong my control and withhold the stranger evolving within me, but my rule quickly began to fade. I backed away from the woman, making a last attempt at avoiding the purpose burned to my existence, and crashed through the window beside me, throwing myself from the building.

On the ground below, I convulsed and throbbed. The image of the woman I was to create flared explosively in my head and I was instantly upon my feet in an irrepressible hunt with my senses and physical control completely lost to the monster of my secondary nature.

Because of the plummet from the building, my instincts had been disoriented and my carnal side had become confused. I ran through dark streets in insane haste and intention, looking for a subject of my art without the heed of specificity.

I came to a marketplace and found a man closing down his shop. Before the man had even the chance to fully see me, I had assaulted him and began to transform him using the picture of the woman in my mind. The matter between my hands felt wrong. The texture of the man's mind and flesh cut me as I worked and I could not complete him; I could not make him anew, smooth and redeemed like the image I set out to form. When I had done all I could do, I was unable to consume him.

Without the ability of my enraptured self to accomplish its goal, my consciousness flooded back into place and left me instantly placing my hands upon the deformed man's mouth as he yelled out in raspy gasps. I was stunned and alarmed and found myself lost in confusion. Before long, the muffles of the man ceased and I removed my hands from his mouth. He no longer moved.

Stars twinkled brightly in the abyss above me. Their glittering was resilient and I wondered from where they came. I looked at them for a time, but when my curiosity had grown tired, I returned to the woman on the bed.