

# Tomorrow

Against the backdrop of heavy rain beating against the coloured windows, Charlotte knelt between the pews and prayed. She prayed for sunshine and she prayed for the strength not to cry again. But more than anything she prayed that Clive would be here tomorrow.

This blasted war!

Less than 24 hours to her wedding and her heart was full of dread. What if his leave had been cancelled?

“Charlotte,” called her mother from the front of the church. “I’ll not have you brooding. Make yourself useful, and fill up this vase with water before these flowers wilt.”

The water tap was in one of the rooms behind the church and she walked the dark corridor that formed the link. Halfway down the hall she paused before a door she had never noticed before, it’s grimy panes of glass basking in golden light.

Intrigued, Charlotte put down the vase and tried the handle. To her surprise the door opened and hot air rushed into the cold corridor, its warmth laced with the scent of wild roses.

Her heart leapt.

Skipping into the little enclosed garden she marveled at the array of coloured flowers that framed this oasis. She had never even known it existed. All this beauty!

“Looks like the weather is clearing just in time,” spoke a man from behind her. She screamed and spun around wildly. “I’m so sorry,” he apologized. “I didn’t mean to frighten you. I saw you enjoying the flowers and.... I’m sorry.”

“It’s all right,” replied Charlotte, her pulse returning to normal. “You startled me, nothing more. You’re forgiven.” She found she couldn’t look away, his eyes held her gaze. His features seem familiar and looked as though he knew her every thought, every secret.

Repeating his initial words he looked at the sky and broke the bond. Relieved Charlotte looked up at the clouds as they draw aside to reveal clear blue sky.

“It’s so strange, only seconds ago it seemed it might rain for forty nights. I don’t understand.”

“There are many things we don’t understand,” he said, moving to her side. Their eyes met again. Charlotte struggled to control her emotions, her hands wanted to reach out and touch him, feel the softness of his skin, hold out her arms and embrace him. Then she thought of Clive and felt ashamed.

"It's okay, he wouldn't mind." said the man, smiling.

"But..." this time, as she looked into his deep brown eyes she knew where she had seen them before. "Are you a relative of his?"

"Not yet, but I will be," he replied cryptically. "You needn't worry, he'll be here tomorrow."

"How can you know?"

"He has to be, otherwise I couldn't be standing here."

Despite his kind face and friendly words, his answers were beginning to scare her.

"I must be getting back, mother will wonder where I am." She turned to leave.

"He'll be here," he called after her. "Believe me."

With the full vase in her arms she returned to find her mother talking to Father O'Sheen.

"There you are, where have you been?"

"Sorry, I've been admiring the Father's little garden." Father O'Sheen raised an eyebrow. "It's so beautiful, why have you never showed it to me before?"

"How could I? It is only a dream I have."

"It looked like more than a dream to me, it was lovely." Father O'Sheen unfolded a piece of paper in his hands.

"How could you know of the garden? I have only just drawn up the plans." Charlotte took the paper and look to the garden she had seen.

"But I've just been standing in it, talking to that strange man."

"That's impossible."

Trying to hold back the tears Charlotte ran to the door. It was locked. Father O'Sheen pulled the key from his pocket and turned it in the lock. The door opened to reveal a small piece of land scattered with broken pews and brick. Rain beat down, forming puddles amongst the rubble. Charlotte fell into his arms and wept.

Cupping a steaming mug of tea in her hands she began to relate her tale. Father O'Sheen listened without interruption, absorbing her every word.

"Am I going mad?" She pleaded as she finished.

"Of course not, but haven't you guessed who he was?"

"I'm so confused. I stood in the garden, I know I did. Who was he?"

"Before I tell you that, I must explain a few things. The love you share with Clive is something very precious, it comes from God. He is all-powerful. With his love anything is possible. And sometimes, when we are scared - as you were - he reaches out and helps us. He is everywhere and he is not bound by time. He lives in the past, in the present and

in the future. All around us there are windows only he can see, windows to both the future and the past. He led you to one of these windows and drew aside the veil revealing my garden as it will be in years to come. More importantly he showed you someone who could reassure you that tomorrow, all will be fine.”

“Who?” She prompted.

Father O’Shane smiled. “Someone for whom tomorrow is all important.” He paused. “It was your son.”

Charlotte stayed silent as the words sunk in.

Her son.

She looked into the Father’s trusting eyes. She smiled. She understood now, doubt never entered her mind. She knew, with total belief, that Clive would be standing next to her on this very spot tomorrow.

She was to be married.

Tomorrow.



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