

The Timeless Place

Amelia had always wondered what will happen after death. Her ideal idea is that there is simply emptiness, that we will cease to exist and nothing we have done in this life will matter anymore. However, there are numerous people that believe that there is life after death and we will live forever in a magical paradise ruled by an ancient god. She doesn't know if she believes that but the first option seems more appealing to her. She just wants peace and quiet, not to start a new life all over again.

Her thoughts were interrupted when she heard someone sit down beside her. She looked up, alarmed because no one ever sat with her. She liked being alone and no one had shown any particular interest in spending time with her anyway. It was a boy her age that she had never seen before. Considering she lived in a small town this was unusual since everyone knows everyone here. He was tall with short dark hair, friendly eyes and full lips that were curved in a bright smile. He was very handsome and well put together which made Amelia feel embarrassed for the lack of effort she put in her style. She straightened her back and discreetly tried to make her messy red hair look presentable.

"Is this place always this dull?" he said and leaned back in his chair, making himself at home. Amelia cleared her throat and struggled to get her mouth to form words.

"Are you talking about Braedon or this library?" she said and looked over the overflowing shelves of books that surrounded every inch of the room.

He smiled even wider. "The town of course. It is so gray and empty, it's like the light vanishes before it gets to this town. I'm Michael by the way. Michael Harris. I'm just passing by, I'm on my way to Leaside and I thought it was a good idea to stop by here in Braedon and have a look around. Do you come here often? Most teen girls I know attend parties instead of staying in near empty libraries".

"I like being alone. I'm also not really a fan of parties" she responded.

"Me neither, too loud and sweaty. I too prefer quiet places such as this one" he said and gestured towards the half- empty room.

"What do you do? I mean, do you have any hobbies? Amelia asked him and mentally patted herself on the back for keeping the conversation going.

"I collect old newspapers. I find it fascinating to read them and imagine what it would have been like to have been alive a hundred years ago" Michael responded and was clearly excited to share his unusual hobby with someone.

"That seems... interesting" she said and tried to look interested but could see in Michael's face that he wasn't convinced.

Amelia couldn't think of anything else to say but the silence wasn't awkward. She could sense that he was also perfectly comfortable sitting in silence and she liked that about him. Amelia felt comfortable and at ease with him which wasn't the case around most people.

They sat there in silence for what felt like an eternity but suddenly Michael stood up from his chair and turned to her.

"I need to show you something. It is only a short walk from here, will you come?"

Amelia considered it briefly and decided to go for it. Although she knew it was maybe not the best idea to go on walks with strangers, she somehow knew he would never cause her any harm.

They walked towards the exit door and before Amelia could reach for the door Michael had already opened it and held it open for her. He smiled kindly at her and gestured her to go first. She smiled back at him, it was the first time in a long time she smiled. They walked towards a small path by the end of the parking lot. Amelia had noticed it before but had always assumed it led to a private property.

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“Where are we going?” Amelia asked while they walked on the narrow footpath that seemed to have no end. She was starting to get out of breath because the path led upwards and she started to feel self-conscious for being so out of shape.

Michael didn't seem to notice her lack of athletic abilities and looked at her with a smirk on his face.

“We're going to my favorite place. The place I go to where I need to think and be alone” He answered.

“Then why are you showing me the place if it's your place to be alone?” Amelia asked and was rather confused.

“Because I think you need to see it” he answered and gave no further explanation.

Amelia didn't have more time to ask questions since they had already reached the end of the path.

Amelia looked around and saw that they were on top of a small cliff that had a view over a huge lake. It was beautiful, the blue lake was completely still and it's blue color contrasted prettily with the deep green color of the trees that surrounded it. The sky was clear and the sun made the lake's clear water glisten like the finest of diamonds. It was the most stunning view she had ever seen and she took a deep breath and relished the moment. She didn't know how long she stood there but after a while Michael addressed her.

“Beautiful isn't it?”

“Very. I feel better here than I have felt in a long time” Amelia said back and couldn't bring herself to take her eyes off the water.

“Do you normally feel sad?” He said and she could sense his voice getting concerned. She turned around to face him and took her time to respond.

“Normally I feel useless. Like the world would be a better place if I wasn't here”. She kept her eyes on the ground and immediately felt like she had said too much.

“I used to feel that way too” he said to her surprise. She looked up to him and saw a look in his eyes that she didn't understand.

“It's not a great feeling, but you have to find a way to appreciate this dear world. Life is way too precious to be thrown away” Michael said with a tone that made her admire his conviction.

They stood there for a while until Michael said he had to go on his way.

“I have to get going. I've got to get to Leaside”. Amelia was saddened to hear those words but was happy that she now always had this place to come to.

They walked together to her car and Michael didn't say goodbye. He only smiled at her in a way that she understood was his way of parting with her. She drove home and had just sat down by the kitchen table when she noticed a newspaper on the table. She never read newspapers and didn't have a subscription. She opened it up and looked inside. The paper has visibly been opened at page 16 quite a lot. She looked at the page and saw an obituary for a 19 year old boy who died by suicide in 1947. She looked at the name and a chill ran through her spine.

Michael Harris.