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My dearest Navarah,

If this letter has reached you then it means that I am gone. I wish that I could have used these last precious moments with you, but that would be far too dangerous. Instead, I will write you a letter, one that I know will not ease the pain of what will happen afterward. I can only hope that this finds you well and that you know how much I love you. One day, perhaps, you can move on and find someone to make you truly happy.

You have made me the happiest man alive. Or at least, I should have been. Now, I fear that I have grasped for too much power; delving into magic that no being upon this world should ever use. I'm ashamed to admit that I have used many dark spells. All I wanted was more power; power to protect you, to rise above the rich who keep us in squalor. Yet in rising to power, I have lost myself.

Dark magic has a terrible price. There cannot be power without the price to pay. In my case, the price will be my humanity. Even now, I can feel it within me... The Darkness eats away at my soul, ripping my memories from me. I cannot remember how you and I met, nor what you look like. All I know is that I love you with all my heart.

When the process is complete, I will not remember you. I will not even remember myself. The Darkness will strip me of everything; my memories, my emotions... The very essence of who I am...

Everything.

I need you to know the truth. It will be painful to hear, but you must finish reading this letter. The more humanity I lose, the more the Dark Magic withers away my flesh. Already it has spread up one of my arms. I had to use my left hand to write this letter. Hopefully, you can read it.

Navarah, you are the woman I love more than life itself and I am so sorry that I did this to us. We had so many plans and those plans - our relationship - should have been enough for me. I made a mistake and now I will pay for it.

I hope that one day you may be able to forgive me. Go away from this land and find your happiness. Find the life that you wanted.

With love,

Valmyr

Navarah's hands trembled as she finished reading the last of Valmyr's letter. Her chest tightened and she crumbled it and threw it to the ground. How many dozen times had she read it? She had memorized each and every word and yet, Valmyr's last words to her still pained her as much as they had when she had first received it over three decades ago.

Her gaze shifted down the hill that she stood upon. The valley below her had once been a beautiful place, green and lush, vivid with life and color. Now, all that remained of it was dry and cracked earth - an empty wasteland, just like the rest of what she had once called her home.

Other wizards like Valmyr had begun using Dark Magic. He was the first to have turned, but he wasn't the last. Years later, the Zombies had slaughtered millions of innocent lives. All that remained were the last survivors, like Navarah, who struggled to live.

The world, a land Navarah had loved and once considered so precious, was now dominated by the Zombies. Each one of them had once been people who had loved, who had craved power, who had made the wrong choices, and now paid the price for it.

Valmyr was out there somewhere, the man she had once believed she would marry. All that remained of him were bones and rotten flesh. His intelligent mind, gone, replaced by a beast with no humanity. His emotions, disappeared, replaced by the urge to kill and eat human flesh.

Tears formed in Navarah's eyes as a light breeze stirred her hair. It lifted the letter from the ground and carried it off into the distance. Navarah reached out for it, but it flew into the sky,

beyond reach.

“No!” she cried. The letter was the last piece she had of Valmyr, the only thing she had of home, of life, of what it meant to be human. Navarah collapsed to the ground on her knees, staring at the valley before her, lost in her memories and pain.

She didn't see the Zombie skulking toward her from behind.