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I Want to go to Church

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I Want to go to Church

A crisp chill ran up her spine, rattling her bones and freezing her blood. The ground squished under-foot, composed of one lump of uneven dirt after the other. The field was deathly quiet, inhabited by nothing more than a thin dusty road, overgrowing weeds, and an old stone building.

Its front wall consisted of a large glass window made of relatively modern stained panes of yellow, orange, and a light ocean blue. Its stones appeared older than they were, cracked and blackened by time, disease, and war. The roof rose to form a peak preceded by a belltower boasting a golden engraved bell and a pointed steeple just barely tall enough to touch the wisps of darkened cloud that threatened to block the gentle light of the moon. A warm light emitted from the church, spreading out from its windows and the cracks in its rotted wood and brass door.

As the woman grew closer, she could feel the hum of an ancient tune vibrating through the ground, beckoning all who wished to worship, pray, or repent. Her feet carried her further, lost in a trance of numb remembrance. Her hands reached to push one of the thick doors inward, stopped by the slight shaking that traversed the flesh and bones of her bare and uncovered fingers.

Through her nose, she breathed in deeply, holding the breath to calm her racing heart for one, two, three seconds before releasing the gust of air through her mouth. As she entered the familiar building, a rush of hot air pressed against her face and thick clothing, instantly filling her with a tingling red sensation.

The mainly one room church, with its arched ceiling and pillared walls, stood with an aura of holiness. Candelabras and small holders lined the far back of the church and the walls with flickering white candles. Their scent filled the room, settling on the air, heavy and choking, but was much welcomed compared to the foul stench of the outside world. Glossy wood pews lined either side of the chamber, split by only a small aisle and velvet red carpet.

The music had been left unnoticed by the woman, only realized after several questioning and awkward glances from the choir had been directed toward her. After a moment of possible regret, a look of turbed emotions flashed across her face: raised eyebrows, flushed cheeks, and an awkward smile.

She hurried down the aisle and darted into one of the center-most pews, close enough to take in the hymn of the choir but also far enough away to disassociate herself. She breathed out a long sigh and leaned back in the uncomfortable unpadded seat. One minute passed by, then two, three. After four, her heart finally calmed enough for her to lean forward, placing her elbows on her knees, and folding her palms and fingers in the way to allow for her nose and face to settle comfortably against the support of her strengthened arms and hands.

She listened...