

Outside of all cities, in the heart of the forest, shrouded in mist and silence, looms an abandoned, decrepit church. Its weathered, decaying spire pierces the sky like a skeletal finger pointing towards the long forgotten heavens above. It is here, in this unholy place, that Cathedral calls it's home. They much prefer to keep to themselves, opting to walk the twisted halls of their home before ever thinking of engaging with another creature. Wanting to remain home, to never leave if they don't have to. Though much to no one's surprise, Cathedral's spirit was as wild and unpredictable as the untamed woods that surrounded their church home. However, beneath their exterior, and wish to remain unbothered and at home, lay an overwhelming curiosity that often led them into realms unknown, and into unseen and potentially dangerous situations. Causing many disturbances to their life, but still they never turn down that small ache in their chest when it starts.

On this cold night, as Cathedral slowly drifted into slumber, it found itself wandering aimlessly through a dreamscape unlike any they had ever encountered before. The air was thick, and heavy with the scent of damp earth and decaying leaves. An eerie and dense fog hung low, obscuring any vision Cathedral might have had of their unfamiliar surroundings. It almost reminded them of their home, but somehow it felt wrong. Undeterred, and unbothered by the ominous atmosphere, they pressed on, drawn deeper into the heart of its subconscious, and farther into the cryptic woods that surrounded them. Their need to know more overshadows any caution they may have (which is already low to be honest).

As they traverse through the mist-shrouded landscape, it quickly became aware of a faint, and distant whispering, like the quiet rustle of leaves in the wind. Ignoring the small chill that crept up their spine, Cathedral decided they would follow the sound. They walked for what felt like forever. In the waking world their feet would hurt, but here it just feels like the ghost of pain, an almost, telling them they can keep going. They walk, and walk, and walk. Trees growing more and more misshapen, and sinister looking as they go, the rocks, and mist melding together in their mind. The panicked feeling of being helplessly lost starts to tug deep in their being. Their pace quickening just slightly as the hope of finding anything different turns into an almost racing heart. Needing to find a way out somehow. That is until they finally stumble into a clearing. They let out a small relieved breath that they did not even realize they were holding. Taking a second before taking in what lay ahead. In front of them, through the twisted parted trees, sits an empty patch of land bathed in bright blue moonlight. The fog seemed to part, as though running away from something, and there, amidst the trees and twisted shadows, stood a tall figure cloaked in darkness.

A deep shiver raced down Cathedral's spine as it slowly, and cautiously approached the mysterious figure ahead. Its features impossibly obscured by the veil of night and its own mystery, even with the bright moonlight surrounding it. Yet, despite their growing feeling of dread, they also felt a strange, and profound sense of familiarity wash over them. It was as if they had known this presence all its life, lurking somewhere in the recesses of their mind. As if it was there around every unseen corner and doorway of their home.

With a voice like a soft breeze, the figure beckons them closer, its words weaving a web of enchantment around them. Mesmerized, Cathedral stepped slowly forward, heart pounding in their chest now as they succumb to the pull of the unknown once more. Their body moving almost on its own, though they would choose to continue even on their own. The feeling of coming this far and needing to know far outweighs everything else in this moment. Curiosity mixes with the feeling of no longer having control. And the moonlight seemed to vanish, shrouding everything back into a thick darkness. Nothingness. And it hung there, voidlike.

And just as suddenly as it came, the darkness parted. Before them lay a vast, seemingly endless, graveyard, its tombstones looming in the soft moonlight. It was quiet, too quiet. Like all sound was being sucked from the air before it could ever form. Cathedral's breath caught in their throat as they realized where they stood. Trapped in a realm of forgotten souls and restless spirits. A never ending land of death, and unease. The feeling of being watched, and being seen on such a raw, and vulnerable level. Like all of these beings, tucked behind trees, stones and graves. Hidden in every shadow, making up the fog itself. As though everything here suddenly knew their deepest secrets, and Cathedrals very thoughts before they did.

They walked, slowly. Letting the graves pass them, careful not to disturb any. And even as fear threatened to consume them, Cathedral felt a strange sense of calm wash over them. The feeling seeping down deep into their bones. For in the midst of this graveyard stood a single, ordinary tombstone. It melded into the masses, nothing setting it apart from any of the others. Though for some unknown reason Cathedral's eye was pulled to it. It's surface was oddly smooth, as though this stone was only recently placed. And the ground looked recently disturbed. And upon looking over this stone, their eye settled on the writing. Etched deep into the hard stone surface in front of them, was their own name. 'Cathedral'. It was as though it had stumbled upon it's own final resting place. Stuck here, for eternity. The looming threat of the fragility of time, and reality itself.

In this moment, Cathedral knew they were sealed to a fate of the endless. They would, inevitably in the flow of time, end up here. Their very being would eventually meld into the mass of energy that was these restless souls. Trapped, and helpless. They would become meaningless, and in the end, become nothing itself. The reality of that, clawing and sinking into their mind, and forming a pit somewhere in their spirit.

With a start, Cathedral shot awake from the dream, their heart racing heavy in their chest, almost painfully. They clung to the remnants of the surreal journey they had just experienced. Brain settling on the thought of nothingness. The fear of fading away. And as the sunlight started to creep through the stained glass windows of the church, casting vibrant and multicolored lights throughout the room, the warmth started to creep across their skin. The feeling of being alive. And the yearning to keep living...

It was in this moment that Cathedral made the decision that they would not live a life in fear of death. When they returned to that world, to the endless grave, it would be when they were

ready. On their terms. Not any sooner, and they wouldn't let anything change that. This would be the start of a long spiral for them, an obsession that always secretly lay in the back of their mind.