

Samantha was born into a somewhat wealthy merchant family, to an elven dad who was often away, but while present was the exact kind of loving and caring father that a girl is lucky to have. Her human mother was the pinnacle of a caring housewife. She was known by everyone for miles around as the sweetest, kindest, and most welcoming woman around, and by far the best cook anyone had ever met. People would frequently drop by for a visit, just hoping she had some fresh baked food available, which she always did. In this loving family, Samantha grew up always knowing happiness. It was quickly discovered she had a beautiful singing voice, and she often would sing for guests, even by only the age of 4. Everyone who heard her knew they heard true talent. Along with singing, her greatest passion was always reading. She would spend hours cooped up in her father's study, reading each and every book she could get her hands on, books of all kind. Fanciful stories of heroism and bravery, romantic poetry collections to melt a lover's heart, dark and brooding mysteries to leave one awake at night, and even historical recountings of the past, battles, kingdoms, heroes. She read them all with equal zeal. It wasn't long until she had read every book in her father's collection, several more than once.

When she turned 9, she decided she wanted to join a nearby monastery, and have the monks give her a proper education, and possibly even train her to be a scholar, to write the books she so loved to read. Her parents, always supportive, loved the idea and arranged for her to live with the monks and receive education in both the classical subjects as well as some of the monk's martial arts, so she would be able to protect herself. Samantha quickly proved herself to be a dedicated student. While not excelling at everything, she gave her all at everything she tried and showed a determination and eagerness to learn that allowed her to quickly learn everything she was presented, martial arts and formal education alike. She spent almost half of each day in the monk's library, even taking meals in there and sometimes sleeping among the many books, absorbing all that she could.

One day, only a few weeks after her 14th birthday, she found a weighty, dust covered tome deep in the library that the monks had likely forgotten was even in the collection. Fascinated by the book, Samantha read and re-read it many many times over the next few days. It contained techniques used by monks trained in ways of the shadow, arts of trickery and deceit passed down through monasteries for centuries. In spite of that, few monks knew the techniques existed, let alone how to use them. But Samantha, with the same determination she had everywhere, she practiced these shadow arts in secret, quickly learning things most people thought long forgotten. After a few years of practice, she decided she wanted to know what adventure felt like. Using her new skills, she simply vanished from the monastery. Her parents, understandably distraught, searched all over for their daughter, but one trained in the ways of shadow is not easily found

But found she was. Not by her teachers, but a young sorcerer, a practitioner of elder magics, who approached the beautiful 17 year old girl's campfire one night. Samantha was understandably cautious of this unknown boy, no more than 14 by the looks of him. He introduced himself elegantly, with a flourish and a bow, as Simon. He explained that he had heard good things about her, and that he thought she would be a good friend to have in days to

come. Inquiring what he meant simply led to him staring at her, and asking for a piece of the rabbit cooking over the fire. Samantha agreed on the condition that he tell her what he meant. He smiled, and agreed. She handed him the rabbit as he sat down across the fire. He took a bite, never taking his eyes off of her. After he finished the bite, he began.

*****CONVERSATION OMITTED, CAUSE I DON'T WANNA WRITE THAT RIGHT NOW*****

Basically, he paints a tantalizing image of adventures, chaos, and misery. She finds the whole picture poetic, and agrees wholeheartedly. This is the first inclination in the backstory that she isn't simply the happy and kind merchant's daughter she has been painted as in the story so far. I'm going to pick back up about 4 years later, cause the interim (while important) doesn't apply so much to the session, so i will save it for when i flesh out the story later. There won't be a transition here, that would be covered in this omitted section. Sorry for the jump right in. Also, sorry parts of this will seem a bit cheesy without the leadup to explain why it is meaningful. Oh, and that transition I dont have, will basically consist of saying she remembers none of anything written previously. Because she doesn't

*****BACK TO THE STORY*****

Having gathered the last catalyst for the reaction, Samantha and Simon were overjoyed to know that they would soon be able to open their portal. Simon would finally bind a powerful outsider to his will, allowing him powers he had dreamed about for years. Samantha felt almost giddy thinking about the chance to meet a daemon, have a conversation with it and listen to its songs and hear the stories of its homeland. After making all the preparations, Samantha walked to the edge of the room and sat down on the floor in the shadows, watching Simon prepare his incantation.

"I don't really remember anything before the ritual. Bits and pieces. My training, a house. Fragments more than anything. But I remember the ritual. All of it. And everything since then.

I remember Simon standing there, with his brow furrowed like he did when he was focusing, and I remember humming quietly to myself, watching him. He was quite pretty, and had grown well into his adult body. Those lips of his did kiss quite well... Almost as if he knew what I was thinking, he looked up at me and smiled. "Soon Samantha, all our work will come to fruition. It is hard to believe how far we have come."

I giggled a little, "I know Simon! This will be so wonderful, I have dreamed of this day so much."

Smiling, he looked back to his book and hummed a few measures in that rough, scratchy voice of his. Not suited for singing at all, but how I loved listening. I sung along with him.

*"Welcome to your life
There's no turning back
Even while we sleep
We will find you*

*Acting on your best behaviour
Turn your back on mother nature
Everybody wants to rule the world*

*It's my own design
It's my own remorse
Help me to decide
Help me make the most*

*Of freedom and of pleasure
Nothing ever lasts forever
Everybody wants to rule the world*

*There's a room where the light won't find you
Holding hands while the walls come tumbling down
When they do I'll be right behind you*

*So glad we've almost made it
So sad they had to fade it
Everybody wants to rule the world*

*I can't stand this indecision
Married with a lack of vision
Everybody wants to rule the world
Say that you'll never never never need it
One headline why believe it ?
Everybody wants to rule the world*

*All for freedom and for pleasure
Nothing ever lasts forever
Everybody wants to rule the world"*

At that I stopped, and simply smiled. He was ready. The way he rocked from foot to foot told me that. I leaned forward eagerly. As he began the incantation, a faint blue light appeared at the center of the room. I found myself drawn to it, leaning in closer and closer until I was on the verge of falling over. The light began pulsing, with some strange rhythm. I could just barely, just beyond the edge of hearing, feel a song. Without realizing I had started, I discovered I was singing along with the song. It was a haunting song, and even while singing it I felt like I did not

know the words. It was the most beautiful song I had ever heard. And it was clearly not of this world, and outside my understanding.

The light had been growing, forming into a small sphere, floating in place. Even though it had no real form, I could sense that it was looking at me. I knew the song was coming from it, and I knew I was singing to it. I never wanted the song to end. I don't know when I stood up, but all the sudden I realized I had walked up to the light, only a foot away from it. It seemed to almost reach towards me. Then Simon yelled out.

"NO! You cannot have her! Ask anything else, but not her!" I blinked, and looked at him. I remember wondering what he was talking about. His face seemed strained, and his head was cocked to the side, like he was listening to something. I looked back at the light but it had shifted to a dark dark red, almost black, and the song had changed. I was no longer singing along, and took a hesitant step backwards from the light. Suddenly there was a screech, that sounded like the fabric of reality was shearing itself in two. A thin rift opened across the floor, thinner than the edge of a piece of paper. A ripple emanated from that light, and passed through me. As it passed through me, I felt as if I was being shaken into pieces, like I would break like shards of glass. I remember hearing Simon shout something, though the words never made it to me. A tendril of light extended from the orb, and was reaching towards me. As it drew closer to me I could hear the song again. I wanted to reach out and take the tendril, I knew I would be able to understand the song then.

But I noticed the rift in the ground. It was growing wider, and suddenly what appeared to be a hand, twisted and distorted almost beyond recognition, reached up through the rift. It was hazy, and I felt like I should be able to see through it. Simon cried out, and I looked over at him. The rift had extended across the ground until it was spreading between his feet. The hand extended further from the crack, placing itself on the floor, as if preparing to lift whatever body it was attached to out of the rift. The arm that followed the hand was just as grotesque, a mockery of the normal form of things in our world. As the arm reached through, the rift widened even more, and it was clear that the... thing attached to that arm wanted to climb through. I looked at Simon, and he looked in pain. The light in the room still was reaching a tendril out to me. I knew I had a choice.

But who could really call that a choice? I grab the tendril.

There is another screech, and another pulse from the rift. Once again, it feels as if my body should be shaking itself apart. There is a blinding flash of darkness. I feel a cackling coming from the rift, and another pulse threatens to end the world. I know that if another pulse happens, I will shatter. I can feel that fact with my very soul. I lock eyes with Simon, and I see fear in his still young face for the first time ever. He blinks and it's gone, replaced by determination. He casts a spell. A flash of darkness blocks my sight for a second. And my grip on the tendril is no more. The orb of light is no more. I stand on the very edge of the rift, looking down into a pit that stretches into a pit so dark it seems to almost pull at me. The only lights I can see in that ink are

two pinpoints of lights that seem to be staring at me, and growing slowly closer. Simon runs over to my side and tries to pull me from the edge. Staring into those eyes, I know what happens next. I turn around and am face to face with Simon. I smile at him. That fear is back in his eyes. With a kiss, I say goodbye. His eyes widen in shock as a shadow falls over him.

As Simon's lifeless body lies limp on the floor, Samantha stands in shock. Even the song ringing in her ears cannot draw her attention away from the corpse. A force pulls at her, trying to drag her through the rift. But she just stands, staring. She steps forward and is suddenly next to his body, picking him up and cradling him in her arms. Tears run freely down her cheeks. Turning towards the thing reaching out of the rift, she addressed the aberration.

"You could have had me. I was ready. The song was calling me, and I was willing to go." Her eyes began to glow a faint green, the color that had been in the eyes of the lifeless boy in her arms. She looked down upon his face, drinking in the details she had memorized over the last four years. "But you killed him. YOU STOLE HIM FROM ME! And now you will NEVER have me. Never. Never. NEVER!" As she screamed the last one, a pulse of green light emanated from her body. When the pulse struck the creature, it recoiled in pain, letting loose a screech that seemed determined to rip the very fabric of reality apart.

*****Simon's version of the ritual*****

*****AKA the part where I explain a lot of bullshit*****

Taking one final look over my notes, I made sure everything was in order. The catalysts were all in place, the circle drawn. I had wards placed over myself and Samantha, to protect us in case the circle failed. I studied back over the incantation I had prepared, and caught myself humming quietly. A habit I picked up from Samantha. Thinking of her, I looked up to where she was sitting across the room, inside her own circle, to ensure she was safe. She was staring right at me, those beautiful sky blue eyes staring directly at me. Smiling at her, I say "Soon Samantha, all our work will come to fruition. It is hard to believe how far we have come."

She giggled, with the infectious enthusiasm she showed when dancing, loving and killing. "I know Simon! This will be so wonderful, I have dreamed of this day so much."

Still smiling, I went back to the incantation. I caught myself humming again, and before long she began to sing along with me. Her marvelous voice was one of the first things I fell in love with. The air hummed with magical energy, as it often did before a ritual, and her voice seemed to resonate with the hum, flowing perfectly. I finished going over the spell, but stayed looking at it, not wanting her to stop singing. But too soon, as always, she stopped singing. She always knew when I was ready. I still don't know how she knew. I took my position, checked that she was still in her circle, and began. The magical hum in the room picked up immediately, and grew stronger with every word. I reached out into the very fabric of reality with my words, and beckoned forward the creature that answered my call. As I finished, I noticed a faint glowing sphere hovering in the center of the circle. The entire room was as silent as the grave, but I

could still feel the hum in the air. It seemed stronger than usual. I couldn't place why. Looking at the sphere, I knew this must be the manifestation of the being I called.

"What is your name demon?"

The voice that responds bounces inside my skull, booming with power. As soon as it speaks I am terrified. *"MY NAME MATTERS NOT. WHO ARE YOU TO SUMMON ME?"*

The voice carried so much strength, so much assuredness of control, that I knew whatever this was on the other side, it was too powerful. I missed something. I forgot something. I never should have summoned something this powerful. I can't handle it.

"I EXPECT AN ANSWER WHEN I SPEAK. I GROW TIRED OF SILENCE. OH, BUT WHAT IS THIS? HER VOICE..... YES SHE WILL MAKE A GRAND SACRIFICE."

I realize that Samantha has left her circle, and approached the light. I had not seen her move. I screamed out in terror, "NO! You cannot have her! Ask anything else, but not her!"

She looked towards me, and seemed surprised, and dazed. I heard the voice again, threatening to split my head open. *"YOU DARE TELL ME WHAT I CAN AND CANNOT HAVE? I WILL TAKE YOUR PRECIOUS GIRL IF I VERY WELL WISH"*

The sphere had shifted colors. I don't know how I noticed that with that voice in my head. It looked angry. It was powerful. I didn't stand a chance to stop it. But it was going to take Samantha. I screamed at the presence as Samantha took a step back. "NO I WON'T LET YOU HAVE HER!"

Suddenly there was a wordless screech that filled the room, and echoed in my head. All other thoughts fled except the pain that noise caused. I felt myself screaming as well. Then the magic in the room *rippled* outwards, passing through me and threatening to unravel my being. The voice boomed again. *"LET ME? AS IF I NEED YOUR PERMISSION"*

How I gathered the strength to scream, I don't know. "SAMANTHA RUN! PLEASE JUST RUN FROM HERE!"

"I WILL TAKE HER AND YOU BOTH" As the words pierced my skull again, I felt the fabric of the room stretch, and looked up. A rift had appeared in the room, stretching across the containment circle I had carved into the floor. I knew this being was far too powerful to be contained by such a simple rune. As I looked, a hand reached up out of the rift, preparing to lift its master into our world. Past that I saw Samantha, wide eyed, those beautiful blue eyes not even the least bit concerned, merely surprised. I saw the sphere, reaching towards her with a single tendril of light. I knew what she was about to do, but I could only watch as she reached out and grabbed it.

The being shrieked again, and the very magic of the spell rippled again, passing through my body and tears at the fabric that holds me together. The rift pulses and darkness fills the room for an instant. The spell pulses one more time, and I knew that the next one would break the spell, and whatever was through that rift would be here. I lock eyes with Samantha. Even now she is not afraid. She is so sure. Confident. Inspiring.

Casting aside any time for doubts, I start casting a banishment. I have no hope of succeeding against this, but I won't let Samantha die. The rift pulses, bringing the darkness along with it, and when I can see again, Samantha is on the edge of the rift, peering down at whatever is within. My spell half cast but forgotten, I rush to her side, and try to pull her away, but she doesn't move. She turn around and looks right at me. Even with everything going on, this close her face is all I can see and I lose myself in her eyes. I know I am going to lose her. And for the first time I can remember, I am truly terrified. I try to memorize her face. She smiles. She leans forward and kisses me. And I know. This kiss is goodbye. The last I will ever see of her. As she pulls back I see the being has pulled its head up from the rift. It looks down at me. And I realize what comes next. Darkness falls over me.

I watch my body fall to the floor, lifeless and limp. I see Samantha standing there, stunned and in shock. I see the being behind her, trying to coax her into the rift. I realize I can't feel anything. No fear, no love, no anger, no emotions run through my mind. All I can think is the fact that Samantha is about to die. And I know that should terrify me. But it doesn't. My soul floats as the scene before me plays in slow motion. Samantha kneels before my corpse, holding my head in her hands. She is crying. She turns towards the being, towards me, and I gasp. Her eyes, her sky blue eyes, are now as green as polished emeralds. As green as the lifeless eyes of the boy in her hands. Through her tears, she yells at the being. "You could have had me. I was ready. The song was calling me, and I was willing to go." she pauses as she looks back down at my still warm corpse. "But you killed him. YOU STOLE HIM FROM ME! And now you will NEVER have me. Never. Never. NEVER!" As she screams, the rage, and passion, and fear, and loss that radiate from her ripples through the magic of the room. The spell I had started to cast, my banishment that remained unfinished as my life left my body, fueled by my determination, found new power in her anguish. It emanated from her, the green pulse following the lines of magic lacing the room. As it hit the being half out of the portal, it screeched yet again, but this one was one of pain. The creature was forced into the rift, clawing around itself, desperately trying to catch itself and stay. The magic was sucked into the rift, which snapped closed as Samantha fell unconscious and slumped over my body. The magic left in the room swirled, with nothing to contain it. It was going to destroy the entire building. With my last shred of strength, I reached out and activated one of the wards I had placed on her. Samantha disappeared from view. Without me there to control it, there is no telling where she would end up. But she would live. My last connection to this place gone, my fractured soul slipped beyond, and I was no more.

*****After Ritual*****

Tam Smithson often found it hard to sleep at night. The constant fear of monster attacks always left him ill at ease, and some nights he felt the need to go out and check his animals, make sure they were all safe in their pens. Even with the walls, he hated not being sure. Tonight was one such night, and as he walked up and down the rows of pens, checking each latch carefully and counting all of his livestock, he was deep in thought. Suddenly, green light flashed out of his barn. Cursing under his breath, he fumbled his sword out of its sheath at his hip. Nearly dropping the lantern due to his shaking hand, he approached the door to his barn, slightly ajar. He nudged it the rest of the way open, raising his lantern up to illuminate the edges. With a curse, he dropped his sword, and ran deeper into the barn. Setting his lantern beside the young woman, he quickly put his fingers to her neck, feeling for a pulse. Upon finding one, he sighed in relief. She was alive, though barely breathing. Taking off his cloak, he wrapped her in it, hiding her nakedness, and picked her up. As he did, he heard her say only one word: "Simon"

Kari Smithson had taken it upon herself to care for this strange young woman who had shown up in their barn two days prior. Clothing her in an old but sturdy dress she had, and sitting in the room for when she woke. And so, in the afternoon of that second day, when the woman jerked up in bed, screaming in panic and flailing around, she was there to run to the edge of the bed and lay a hand on her shoulder, and comfort her.

"Shh, shh. It's ok. It's ok you are safe, we are caring for you. Calm down." The woman did in fact calm down, quickly looking around the room before staring intently at Kari. Kari barely managed to avoid gasping when those eyes locked with hers. One a bright icy blue. The other a piercing, emerald green.

"Where am I?"

"We found you in our barn, two nights-" "Where am I?" Her multicolored eyes burned with an intensity Kari had only rarely seen, and never in one so young.

"A small farm in Stensia, near-" "Stensia? Where is that?"

Kari was taken aback. "What do you mean?"

The woman's eyes widened. She whispered, "I can't remember...." "Can't remember what?"

"I can't remember anything before, before..." here she winced "Before waking up here" she finished with a bit more authority.

Kari felt sadness well up inside her. "Oh dear, I'm so sorry. Do you remember your name at least?" "Samantha. My name is Samantha."

Over the next few weeks, Samantha recovered her strength, working for Tam and his wife to repay them for helping her. The couple could tell that something was off about this girl, but most

of the time she seemed happy to help, and incredibly thankful for their assistance, continuing to provide for her as she finished recovering. But she couldn't hide the haunting songs she sang as she worked, the tear stained cheeks, the looks in the house's one mirror as if seeing her face for the first time with a hand raised up to her green eye, or the times when she would seem lost, staring at nothing. About three weeks after her unexplained arrival, having learned what she could about the land she had found herself in, she set off into the wild. What she was looking for, she wasn't sure. The only two things she knew for sure was that Simon, her dear friend Simon, wasn't dead, and that somewhere out there, a song waited for her to find it.

This next section happens sometime after her introduction to Einode. During this period, among other things she spent time hunting rumors of the song she is always hunting. Being a fantasy world, there are no shortage of people who have heard eerie songs. This section involves one such person, who seems a better lead than most.

Samantha closes the door to the shack, sliding the bolt home. Turning to face the inside of the single room, she let her gaze fall on the man intricately tied to a chair in the center of the room, and allowed a small, innocent smile to appear on her lips. The man struggled against his bonds, but had given up begging for release about an hour ago, as his voice grew hoarse. She glided across the floor, swaying seductively as she did, and gracefully sat down in the chair across from him, crossing her legs and smoothing her dress. Her multicolored eyes never left the man's face.

"So, James. It is James, right?" she waited for his nod, before continuing in her almost breathy voice. "I am going to tell you a story. It is a short story, but I feel it is very important. And I would love for you to hear it."

The man seemed too scared to even blink as she continued.

"There was once a pale man with blue and green eyes who was always lonely. You could ask, 'why was he lonely?' but the answer is simple. All things had to meet this man, so they shunned him. They ran from him. And that is why he was lonely. But see, one day he had an idea. He took an axe, and split himself in two," -at that, Samantha drew her hand down the middle of her face, drawing attention to her blue and green eyes- "right down the middle. That way, he would always have a friend."

By this point, all the color had drained from James' face, and he had stopped struggling against his bonds, in favor of shrinking back a way from this girl with the multicolored eyes. "What do you want" he stammered out.

Samantha smiled, leaned in so her mouth was right next to his ear, and whispered with a lover's tenderness, "I want the song."

As she leaned back, she saw that his face was contorted in terror, but also tinged with confusion. "The song? Do you mean that weird dream I keep having?"

She nods.

"What about it?" he asks, seeming to calm down some.

She simply tilts her head, widens her eyes a bit and says "All about it."

He shudders, seemingly involuntarily. "all I know is, I hear a song, faintly, just out of hearing. The melody is haunting, it seems otherworldly. But I can't make it out. There are words being sung, but those are also just out of reach. I want so desperately to hear it. But I never can, no matter how hard I strain to hear it. And that's it, I promise."

Samantha let her smile slip from her face. "Nothing more?" she asked, her voice still slightly breathy.

"Nothing, I swear"

"Well then James," at this point, she leans in very close to his face, so all he can see are her eyes of green and blue. Her voice had gained a hard edge. " you have a choice to make. Green or blue? Choose well."

"What? What do you mean?" an edge of terror was creeping back into his voice.

"You heard. Green or blue?"

"Um, I don't know, green! Green, I pick green." he twisted his face away from hers and squeezed his eyes shut. Because of that, he did not see her blue eye gain a tint of green, or her face gain an honest, happy grin. She leaned a bit closer, and placed a single kiss on his exposed cheek. Startled, he turned to face her, but any reassurance he felt quickly dissolved as she began to sing. She sang softly, so before long his pain filled howls drowned out her song. But still she sang.

*The weft and weave of fate guides the hunters to their prey
From the bush the Lamb will wait, while Wolf begins to play.
"Can you hear me?" says the Wolf, within his target's ear.
Nothing satisfies his hunger quite like fresh cooked fear.*

*The Lamb appears so swiftly, "Dear Wolf, let her be."
"I understand your hunger, but she belongs to me."
Lamb brought forth an arrow and raised it to her head.*

"Today your life no more shall be, welcome to the dead."

*The masks showed no pity as the arrow took its course,
Simple and unchanging was death without remorse.*

*Wolf looked at the Lamb with an unrepentant grin,
Their souls are one, a Kindred; the hunt again begins.*