

A Torn Mind Piece

# Eyes of Fright

## The Beast

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1510 Words

Ravenous left his troubles to the wind and in full sprint charged the monastery. Large wooden doors with great rings to pull them open stood before him. He pawed the door and watched the wood scrape off like foil, but the solid construction told him to find another way. He sat, pondering a plan until the doors began to creak open. He ran in a half circle and sat in place again.

“Brother Joseph,” a monk said, startled, “have you seen this beast on our land before?”

“No, Brother George. This creature has not set foot within court land miles.

“Do you think he may be a sign? Brother Jacob’s recent departure has left a rather gaping hole. A rather low morale has been plaguing us.”

“You think this beast is from God? Look at his coat. It’s jet black. He looks to be sent from Lucifer.”

Brother George fixed his gaze on Joseph.

“Ideas like that won’t nourish a healthy mind.”

“Perhaps I was rash. I meant nothing by it. Only to suggest another view.”

“Well, it’s a view I do not wish to share or entertain.”

“My apologies, Brother George.”

“I want you to seek Brother Jamie. You tend to this beast. Give him shelter, food, water, and prayer. Then ask of our Brother Jamie to aid in dispelling such wicked thoughts you seem to

harbor. From Lucifer? Disgusting, Brother Joseph. I will not tolerate such nonsense. Promise me this will not happen again.”

“It shall not happen again, Brother George. Please forgive me.”

“I’ll give you my forgiveness in a week’s time if I see fit.”

Joseph approached the large black wolf and stroked the back of his head. He crouched to his level and planted his palm on the beast’s shoulder.

“Please accept my hospitality. It’s what Jacob would have wanted.”

Ravenous followed Joseph into the main courtyard. He examined the architecture and structures, looking for points of vantage.

The courtyard was bathed in moonlight with full exposure to the outside. Most of the cloisters were attached, but there were two unattached buildings. The inside walls they passed were lined with torches. They entered the living quarters, which featured twenty rooms. Each had a very simple wooden bed with a white pillow, a light sheet, a heavy sheet, a knee rest, and a Bible.

“What shall I call you?” Joseph asked the beast, who simply looked back with cool, fixed eyes. “How is Lazarus?” The wolf licked his teeth. “Ah, yes, that’ll do,” the monk said. As Joseph turned his back, Ravenous changed form to a bat, flew above the rafters, and watched. Joseph spun in circles, entirely stupefied. He held his arms out in defeat and stormed towards the dining room.

“Ah, Brother Jamie.”

“Hello, Brother Joseph, you look quite flustered.”

“There’s been a bit of turmoil. I feel so confused. It all started with this animal – a wolf that was just outside our main courtyard – outside the heavy doors.”

“Yes, I heard you were seen with a wolf in company. How nice that must be to be put in charge of such a large splendid animal. By the way, where is he now?”

Joseph swallowed hard. “Resting,” he lied.

“Ah, yes, I wonder how far away he may have traveled from. I haven’t seen such an animal around these parts if anywhere.”

“Yes, he is quite a stand out, and uncommon – that I agree with.”

“Join me.”

Joseph sat down and allowed Jamie to pour him a full goblet of lush red wine. He swirled the drink and dipped his mouth to it.

“Refreshing,” he admitted.

“Tell me, is something troubling you?” he asked, and shoved a generous chunk of bread into his mouth, and offered the same to Joseph.

“Thank you, friend. Yes, well, I made a rather absurd remark while in converse with Brother George.”

Wide eyes met his.

“Brother George doesn’t entertain much. His humor is rather at the bottom of the barrel. Bless his soul.”

Joseph was surprised by the straight-forwardness.

“What was this remark,” Jamie asked.

“I suggested the beast may have been sent from Lucifer.”

Jamie coughed up his bread and spat wine.

“I’m sorry, Brother Jamie, it was out of place. Perhaps I shouldn’t have even brought this to you.”

“No, it’s quite alright. You know these cloisters can get rather routine-like. To hear such is a startle for anyone. Now, what made you make this declaration – suggestion?”

“Its eyes. They’re very unlike any animal I’ve ever seen. They seemed to think – to dwell on thoughts, and possibly even formulate plans.”

Jamie’s eyebrows lifted and forehead crinkled.

“Interesting. You are not testing my patience are you?”

“I would never do such a thing, brother. Please.”

“Have you had any falter in your faith, Brother Joseph?”

“No.”

“God tests us. He puts challenges ahead of us and sees how we persevere, and ultimately it makes us more complete. Yes? A stronger version of our prior selves.

I witnessed a man drown in my youth. He was a heretic and so I thought it proper and fitting, but had I another chance, I'd save that man. I'd speak to him about God and I'd lend an ear in perhaps a way that no one had done for him. We tend to fall into an easy routine and quickly forget that God has these certain challenges and just when you're comfortable enough, he reminds you that life isn't so easy after all. Things that are easy do not test us. They do not sharpen our minds or improve our ethics or morals.”

Joseph drank deep into his cup, unsure how to respond.

“Do you think that animal is from Lucifer?”

Joseph couldn't find an answer. He stretched and pulled at his own face, fighting internal conflicts, trying to put sense to the talks with Brother George and Brother Jamie. They didn't even seem to agree with each other. Had Brother George known that?

Time seemed to escape Joseph. His face deformed to a spectrum of uncomfortable, awkward states. Jamie wasn't bothered by this altercation. He almost reveled in Joseph's contortions and incited them on. Jamie filled both of their cups to the brim. He smiled, raising his wine.

Joseph shook his index finger and looked to Jamie.

“Might I ask you, whether you think this beast is from Lucifer?”

“I’ll answer your question. But I’d prefer you not be offset by my opinion on the matter.”

“Please, state your mind, whatever it may be. There are no wrong answers. Remember where you are, brother. This is God’s sanctuary for us.”

“Yes, then. I believe that’s my answer. I think he’s from *or of* Lucifer, or possibly Lucifer himself.”

Jamie nodded, standing up. He paced the room, turning sharply on his heels.

“Animals and people both at times may show behavior and actions that we may deem similar to that of how God or Lucifer would act, and make such remarks in plain sight, no matter how outlandish it may look. Do not worry about Brother George. Perhaps something was troubling him prior to this incident. I will speak to him. You have nothing to fear.”

Joseph felt relieved. “Thank you, Brother Jamie,” he said, downed his cup, and left the room.

Ravenous sat perched on the roof and watched the lights in the sky bleed out of the night. He took to the wind and flapped his wings hard and long until the monastery was out of sight. He stopped at a small cottage with an adjacent farm and flew into the attic. He relaxed his body and cleared his mind. He left a single image of Marsela’s large, tantalizing eyes in his mind and slid into sleep.

He rose from slumber and took to the skies again. He felt his flying technique improving. His muscles pumped him through the night like a swimmer. He passed the three rivers, gritting

his teeth, ashamed he hadn't finished his job the other night. His eyes didn't search for Marsela; he knew his errors might take years to be laid to rest.

On the roof of the cloisters, he watched the monks, and watched the clouds transpire in the humidity of the night. Ravenous folded his wings in and deformed into a wolf, growing ever bigger. The thick of the air was perfect, he thought. It would slow the pathetic, inferior humans, while he would unleash his endless endurance. The humans reeked of salty and slimy flesh, but he crawled, craving their vitals.

He snarled with a malevolent storm brewing in his eyes. His breath was slow and thick with spit. Drool drizzled below and hit the head of a monk. The man's eyes slowly fixed onto the wolf. He fell backwards and paddled backwards on the grass. The monstrous wolf lurked, pawing the air. He howled upwards in anger and flew towards the monk as a wrecking ball of fury, desperation, and hate.

Blood flooded the beast's mouth. A long purple tongue lashed out of his mouth and licked his sharp incisors.