

Horror

Penance – Book Two – In The Beginning

By: Stephanie J. Bardy



Stephanie J. Bardy

Stephanie J. Bardy is an accomplished author, poet and editor. She is Editor in Chief at *The World of Myth Magazine* and has held an editing position with them for over 5 years. She is also Editor in Chief for *The JayZoMon Dark Myth Company, LLC*.

In the beginning, there was energy. Sharp, fast, ever moving, but never ceasing, energy. It could be changed, transformed, but it could never be destroyed. Everything was energy, and darkness. Until he spoke it into light and form. Then there was life and creation. In the beginning she did not exist beyond the energy. Until she did. “Daughter, it is time.” Spoke the Great Voice. The energy began swirling and moving, faster and faster until it began to take form. Warmth, and life enveloped the energy into itself. “You must go, you must learn, and you must create.” Said the Great Voice. “Yes Father.” A voice, small and soft, replied. So, she began her journey, her quest. To learn, and to create. It had taken her many places, and she saw many things. Which all

brought her to this moment. The light faded slowly, setting behind the pine trees across the lake. The water held the appearance of glass as it was still and motionless. The reflection of the shoreline a perfectly mirrored image, making it hard to tell the difference between the sky and the water. She stood, just as still, at the edge of the water. The sand beneath her feet, which had held such warmth earlier in the day, was cooling rapidly as the sun disappeared. She paid no attention to it. Her gaze fixed on the water, or rather, in the water. She had led a good life this time around. Had been kind, gentle, loving. Taken each moment with care. Made more memories than ever before, relishing in them as she drifted away each night. She had made a mark on her world. The world that she was part of, the people in that world. It was a small piece of the greater picture, but she had made the utmost best of it. Using the lessons she had learned from her previous incarnations. Wolf, Bat, Cat, and many others,

Her published works include *Eternally Bound, Eternally Bound PCE Exclusive Edition, The Chosen, The World of Myth Anthology Volume 3, Full Moon & Howlin: A Werewolf Anthology, Monsterthology 2, Full Moon & Howlin: A Werewolf, The Chosen, Natural Instincts, The World of Myth Anthology Volume 4, Musing From Me, Unwelcomed: Stories of Hauntings and possessions, Penance and The Monster Within: Tales of A Tortured Mind.*

She has several short stories to her credit on The World of Myth Magazine, and several works of poetry.

She has edited thirty books and all of the works on The World of Myth Magazine for the last five years.

are forms she had taken. Over time, she had learned how to shift between each one, changing at will. Using the benefits of one species to enhance another had been a thrill for her. Then she had mastered the ability to become human. Over the millennia of moons, she had made many mistakes. But each time she returned, she used those valuable lessons to hone her skills, enrich her studies and sharpen her wits. She learned to walk, run, swim. Hunt, for food and sport, although she soon realized that sport was a waste of resources, both hers and her preys. She learned how to build, and rebuild better.

Then, she discovered more like her. Not quite as advanced, but she taught them, guided them, like her children. She learned about love, loss, hate and anger. She learned how to control emotion and harness their power. She discovered that love was the most powerful of all the emotions. It was one that scared her. Nothing else did, but that. Love lead to other emotions if not tended carefully, and even when all precautions are taken, and care is gentle, Love can lead to Loss, which brings Grief. Those were the times she would shift into Wolf and run, or Bat and fly, trying to escape the pain that was so deep inside her. Each

time, she would fall, and she would break. Then she would return to her beginning and start again.

The water had taken on a slight wave and was now lapping over her bare toes. The motion and the brisk temperature of the water brought her back to the now.

She had been in this village for several years. Something about this place, the peaceful lake, the protective circle of pine trees, the people, all comforted her. She felt at home, if she could ever feel at home anywhere. This had become familiar, they called her by a name they had chosen, because she didn't have one when she arrived. They called her Theresa, but the small children called her Reesa. She liked it. It felt right. Some of the elders called her The Mother. She had a way with things that were hurting or dying. She seemed to inspire growth and life wherever she walked. Their crops were thriving, their children healthy, their animals happy.

Until today. Today she did something that caused the villagers to become fearful and suspect. She only wanted to help the small bird, but it was already gone. She could see the energy, or soul as the villagers called it, hovering above the small body. All she did was put it back. It

wasn't time yet for the small bird to go.

"You have forgotten your role Daughter." The Great Voice said. It seemed to be all around her. Bouncing off the rocks, shaking the tree's and blowing the grass like a great wind. But none of the villagers could hear it, only her.

"You must start again, taking what you have learned from this lesson, into the next life." The Great Voice admonished.

So here she stood, at the lakes edge. All she had to do was walk into the water and return to the energy she had come from. The villagers would think she had fled. She could come back, different, and try again. She loved this place and the loss she was feeling caused a physical pain in her chest.

She turned from the lake. She began to walk along the river that fed the lake. She wasn't ready yet, maybe if she removed the memory she could stay.

"That is not how it works my dear Daughter." The Great Voice whispered through her mind. She stared up at the sky, she glared at the trees, she cursed at the water. "Why? I have all this power, why can't I use it for myself?"

The tree's shuddered, the lake broke out into great waves, thrashing about, and the sky darkened and snapped with

lightening.

"Have you learned nothing from all your time here?" The Great Voice bellowed.

"You are one of the Celestial beings. Made from stardust and great power. I created you to learn, to observe and to create. Not to change the mistakes you have made."

Everything fell still and silent.

She stood, shaking.

The Great Voice returned softly.

"Let this be the lesson you now must learn."

Then all went black.

Reesa fell, surrounded by 6 people.

"You hit her too hard!" Tiana cried.

Aaron smirked, "It will be easier if she is dead."

Jayden glared at him, "It won't work if she is dead. We need her blood flowing for the energy to flow."

Jorden knelt down beside Reesa and touched her face. "She is still breathing and warm. I didn't kill her."

Jayden motioned for Jorden and Aaron to pick her up and follow him to the cave. From the shadows, more people, dressed in cloaks, followed them and began chanting softly in the candlelight.

They laid her on the great marble slab and began to set up for their ritual.

Jayden was barking out

instructions.

"Soon my friends! Soon we will have the power of this God!"

Reesa opened her eyes as she was being tied to the slab. She had no memory. She panicked and began pulling and screaming, she didn't know what was happening and when they tore into her flesh a great power surged through her. She tore her bindings and rose above them all. Energy surged through her and she had a moment of clarity. She knew she was powerful; and she knew she would make them pay. Beyond that, she had no memory.

Once she was done and there was nothing left but the curse she had given them. She walked out of the cave.

She stood looking at the river. She remembered the river. But nothing else. She began walking. She walked for hours, days, weeks and months.

The pain inside her grew. The anger grew. What was once beautiful and peaceful and gentle in her, was now hard, cold and hungry. She came to the small village, as she had been circling it in her walking. She didn't remember that she had loved these people, she didn't remember that she had lived among them.

"Reese?" a small baby cooed at her.

Reese. That must be her name.

Hunger, and anger took over and she destroyed the village. She turned everyone and everything to dust.

Then she began walking again, this time in a straight line.

To Be Continued.