



RAVAGED SPIRIT

by Tell Payne

Colors chased one another in a violent swirl of fury, each one racing ahead of another, streaking in and fading out almost too soon to be noticed. Noise raged impalpably, fusing into a chaotic song, at once roaring and soothing. Other perceptions warred as well, some pleasant, others unbearable, but all of it new.

Change was steadily taking place, a horrible change, one which defied the laws of nature: physical form. The Spirit was gaining mass, gaining senses which did not belong to it, being forced into the mortal plane. A wailing rose, piercing the sky, piercing the ground below, piercing everything.

“Come forth, child! Come into my world and serve me!”

Physical form had taken hold, though it seemed to change from one moment to the next. The noise quieted, colors faded, and mass weighed down. Decay settled in, with it came fear. No Spirit should be bound physically into a body. Already it could feel the body dying before its shape had settled.

“Yes. Yes! Take form and breathe life!”

Pain wracked the fragile new body. Convulsions shook it, and shivering tormented it. The shifting was ceasing, and the body of a sexless youth was filling out.

“My child! I am your mother. Come to me, be mine,” said a woman clad in blue robes.

Ignorant of how to move its body, the Spirit lay still, looking with horror upon its body. Skin became firm, and hair grew. But still there was decay, death. A Spirit was never supposed to experience these sensations. They never died, they were never born. Spirits were free, mortals were trapped. The Spirit never knew how trapped mortals were until now.

A cry filled the air. The Spirit screamed in horror, pity, pain, and sorrow all at once.

“Come now, rise up and walk to me,” demanded the robed woman.

The Spirit raised its head and stared at the woman. Anger filled it, fueled it. Shakily it rose to its feet, and cautiously took an unsteady step. Its body quivered and trembled. Skin began to grow older by the second.

What was this? New panic dizzied the Spirit. Decay rushed in on the body, until it crashed to the ground in a cloud of dust.

Snorting, the robed woman walked to where the Spirit had been. Nothing remained of

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the body. “Another failure, but at least this one lived for a while. I am close to bringing Spirits into this world, very close. Perhaps the next one will work. Bring out the next one!”

“My Lady Narris, we have no more Spirits at the moment,” a white robed figure informed her.

“What, no more for today? So be it, three’s enough. We shall try again when we have more to experiment with,” Lady Narris commented.

“I’m curious, Lady. What becomes of the Spirit after the body has been destroyed?”

“Are you getting sentimental on me, Arawn?” Narris asked. “I suppose they return to being Spirits, but there is also a chance that they die after having lived in a mortal body. Who knows?”

“Ah, I suppose that makes sense.”

Lady Narris began walking out of the small stone room, Arawn following her. She had been conducting experiments on Spirits for a few years, but only recently had she been trying to tie them into physical bodies.

“Arawn, when will we obtain more Spirits?”

“Well, we should have more in three days, unless you wish me to try summoning some sooner.”

“No, I can wait.”

Lady Narris had planned on using the Spirits as a personal guard of sorts. They would be able to wield magic better than a human could dream. Giving them life, or imprisoning them in it, gave her control over them. With the Empire crumbled, and nobles looking for easy power, she needed all the power she could muster while appearing to remain her docile self.

Courtly matters were tiresome for her, and she’d rather be left to her studies, but being a member of the nobility in the Middle Kingdom, she must show herself now and then to keep up appearances. If only there was a way to keep appearances and distance at the same time.

A smile slithered across Lady Narris’ face as she chuckled.

“What is it, Lady?” Arawn asked.

His only answer was a melodious laugh.





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