

The bottle

by stickleyhunter

A woman alone at night, contemplating her relationships.

One

Chapter 1 of 1

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She stared at the emerald green eyes watching her in the mirror. She had always loved her own eyes, but at this moment they looked different. Empty. Tired. She was so tired. Physically. Mentally. Emotionally. How many times had she done this? How many more times would she do this?

She took out the picture of her lover, hidden in the bottom drawer of her dressing table. Her fingers lightly grazed the wooden frame and ran over the glass that held his face. Carefully. Gently. She could almost feel him. She longed to feel him. He never made her feel tired.

She had been seeing her lover for many months now. He was a kind man. Tender and caring, he made her feel warm and loved. Feelings she had long ago forgotten. He had strong hands and broad shoulders. A farmer by trade, she had met him in the market. He was selling, and she was buying. It had all been rather innocent. She stretched out her hand, and touched his by accident. The reaction was immediate. If she had been more educated, it might have reminded her of chemistry. But she was a simple woman, in a simple town, holding the hand of a simple farmer. Timidly, she apologized, but made no move to let go. He smiled in return, and the rest they say, was history.

After returning the picture to its hiding place, she noiselessly made her way back to bed. And back to her husband. She was careful to wipe the tears from her eyes before pulling back the bedclothes and slipping underneath. Silently. It would not do to wake him now. He always hated when she cried. And she knew not to expect comfort. He was either unwilling or unable to offer solace, and she learned long ago that it was best to cry alone. Though, if truths are told, a small part of her still held out hope that he might someday offer soothing words in her times of sadness. In fact, that was the mistake she had made this very night. The reason she had tears that needed drying.

She had worked for many hours. Feeling lonely and unattractive, she turned to her husband, eager for his companionship and a friendly smile. She received neither. She remembered his response clearly. Silence and a stony face. She might have been nothing for all of his behavior. Perhaps she was nothing. He certainly made her feel that way.

As she lay in bed, she listened to the sound of his breathing. In and out, slowly and evenly the air entered his chest, and then left again. Consistent. Unchanging. Just like him. He was never going to change. She knew that now. Sadly, the tears escaped her eyes. She could not remember a time when she had felt more alone.

She turned her head to look at the vial as it sat on her bedside table. Such a lovely shade of dark blue. It had always been her favorite color. It seemed fitting somehow. She hoped her farmer would understand. She wished she had told him goodbye. Briefly, she wondered if someone would even tell him what happened. Nobody knew of their love. But, even if they didn't tell him directly, it was a small town. He would know shortly. She whispered his name, asking his forgiveness.

As she brought the vial to her lips, her husband stirred in his sleep. She strained to hear his slumber filled words. "I love you," he mumbled. For the briefest of moments, she smiled. He loved her. The tears were falling freely now, spilling down her cheek and onto her bosom. He loved her. Why he couldn't tell her when he was awake she would never know. Slowly, she placed the lid on the vial and set it back down on the table. She laid her head back against the soft feather of the pillow. Carefully she pulled the quilt up to her neck and shut her eyes. Her nightly ritual complete, she knew sleep would come quickly. She hoped to dream of her farmer. But if not tonight, perhaps tomorrow night. After her ritual, of course.

