

The Inevitable

Life emerges. Fantastical and full. Ignorant and blissful. Stupidly, scrumptiously, *living*. She squirms in her cage of flesh, appalled at her state of captivity. Bouncing about, she slips between toes, flushes cheeks, wets eyes, and climbs up the throat, investigating the boundaries of her prison. While the body learns to abide by the ways of the world, the spirit within searches in vain to escape.

In the lucky ones, Life's liveliness remains intact through the trials of time, until person is finally given a taste of freedom. Life rejoices at the prospect, unaware of the dangers hidden from sight. She shines from within her bodily captivity, radiance seeping from the skin and stretching beyond the horizon. She sings from the rooftops of her dream to remain in this perfect moment, to stay alive forever. But as Life makes herself known in the world, she rouses threats that linger in the darkness.

Death awakens. A searing pain stings her, but the dreadful spirit delights in suffering of any kind, even her own. This feeling is a particular pleasure, however. As Life's light pierces Death's soul, it serves as a summons upon her, one that she cannot refuse. Death exists for a sole purpose, and now she has had her call to action— she must snuff out the light, putting an end to Life. Life, innocent and sweet, has only just begun to feel contented, despite existing in a confined creature. She has just started to truly live in the soul of man. But Death, unforgiving and cruel, already begins to stalk her. The predator and the prey. The chase begins.

Death has the upperhand. She is omnipresent, almighty and eternal. She knows how it will end, how it always has. Rebirthed in unison with every Life, she is awakened each time Life, in all her naivety, signals Death of her presence. Life never recollects that they've fought this

fight billions of times. Never remembers the billions of ways she's lost. Every. Single. Time. But Death never tires of it. The chase is never the same, and she was created a winner. She will *always* win.

As Death casts herself out into the world, Life makes the errand easy for her. She ravishes in her radiance, gleaming and glisenting unapologetically, leaving a breadcrumb trail for Death to follow. As Life twists, turns, dances, and delights in living, Death sneaks betwixt the shadows, awaiting the perfect moment to strike. She juts out from the dark occasionally, testing the limit, toying with Life as she slips out from under Death's claw.

Each close call puts Life a bit more on edge, diminishing her light, little by little. What once resembled the dance of a graceful gazelle transforms into a clumsy, desperate pursuit, Life stumbling away from Death. The lamb and the wolf. Fear and hunger— hunger that cannot be silenced. Death snarls at Life, and the chase comes to its beastly finale. The final, fatal fall of the lamb, and the wolf sinks in its claws into her flesh. Blood is spilled. Death relishes in the smell of it, the taste of it. Her eternal victory endures.