

Solum's Song

By Zen J. Jackson

Solum hovered with leathery wings over the trailing shadow of his beloved Ambar as she walked home. The aging night, deep in purple, accompanied the glimmering lit street in the rain's merciless pour. Her rippling reflections appeared as if summoned amongst the heavy puddles. Solum adored such cleansing evenings, however, the unseen demon worshiped the earthling ever more.

Any demon such as Solum ought to possess a vulnerable human like Ambar, but instead he fell for her in ways unknown to his kind. To be seen by the girl required a single touch, however if revealed, Ambar and the infatuated creature would be hunted down by his deviant brothers of the underworld. If ever Solum's hellish existence proved true, his dark realm could be destroyed. He kept his identity hidden to protect Ambar's life, still he yearned for her heart's song.

Solum, bushy tailed and strong, kept a courteous distance from his prey while temptation led him within reach. To caress the fragile human only happened in his dreams, a dream he ached to come true. A single graze against her brown sugared flesh would bring him even closer to his thirst. Although he believed it could never happen, he settled with haunting Ambar, and listening to her pulse.

Distant in thought, she sniffled along the sidewalk. Ambar was sick. Not from a cold, but from heartbreak. To know her, Solum listened with care. Many days were spent studying Ambar's pain through sound responding from the pumping of her blood. Her sorrow kept him around longer than intended.

Her delicate neck hid behind collars of her black peacoat. Silky wet hair hid her eyes as she faced the ground in embarrassment. She strolled through the night without an umbrella or single care of her surroundings. A demon could easily possess a human in such a state, empowered by weakness and fear, but Solum brought Ambar no harm.

"My love, if only I could hold you," he said. "If you only knew you are not alone in such moments."

Solum knew a response did not manifest. Still, he coped with his imagination by believing Ambar listened.

"I am here for you. Always."

The demon concluded such sadness was given to his love by the actions of another. It wasn't Ambar's mother or father responsible for her discomfort, otherwise thumping with weighted rebellion would throb. It had nothing to do with school; an anxious and restless vibration was lacking. In fact, while Solum listened, his narrow ears erected to discover the absence of her heart's ballad. Her breast settled dull in movement and hollow in rhythm, clinging to life with faint taps.

"Curse you, Michael!" said Solum.

Ambar and Michael had been courting for months. She gave him trust, and he devoured her innocence. With a god complex, confident and inferior, Michael reminded Solum of his brothers in perdition. Aware of his charm and power, the boy gallops to his next quest, leaving

his benevolent casualties in pieces. Solum wished to protect Ambar from such monsters, but worse demons lingered than Michael and him. The most cruel and treacherous sons of the Dark Lord patrolled in the event of any laws from the underworld broke. Solum watched Michael mistreat Ambar, but never interfered.

Large silver beads of rain fell heavier from the sky crackling onto the earth's surface. Mist became thick, shrinking the world with its fog while gutters inhaled gallons of water at a time. And as the sea expelled from the clouds, Ambar's sniveling became sobs of tears as if weather and despair danced by the same force. Drowning in empathy, Solum flew close while she showered in her own suffering.

"Oh, my siren, if I could only embrace you. Then you would know how loved you are."

While some days were beautiful, others caused him pain as he forced himself to stay, rooting for the moment Ambar resurrected from her misery.

"If only I could touch you, I would put you back together one bit at a time," said Solum. "But if I did, we could no longer be." Chastened by safety, the demon retreated.

Despite the hail of water flooding from above, Ambar paced into the smog, vanishing away. Home, a last resort for comfort, became the final destination. Her prideful parents committed to shaming her for her juvenile mistakes and felt Michael to be her worst. Capable of only poking at her wounds, she took her time to face them.

Her house slept on the opposite side of the road, and without lifting her head, Ambar sensed she'd arrived. Her heartbeat increased, engulfed in her humiliation and thundering to a beat of disgrace. As she crossed the street, Solum flew. He jolted. A heavy engine approached without any consideration.

"Stop!" said Solum. "Watch out!"

Ambar became like a deer as she witnessed the truck speeding towards her. Too somber to react, she forced her eyes closed and welcomed the excruciating pass.

Solum fought his desires with great strength, but he couldn't resist. His wings thrashed towards his love. He swept her off her feet, resting his sweet damsel in his arms. The car disappeared into the curtains of rain. Ambar opened her emerald eyes to see the snouted demon gazing back. With flared wings pointed at their tips, Solum shielded the white noise of crashing water. Ambar's heart once again sang a song pleasing to Solum's ears; the same sound when she encountered a field of white lilies or when sipping mint tea smothered in honey. With a soft whisper, the words crept from her tender chapped lips,

"Are you my angel?"