



The Forgotten Bride

Eve Powers

Authors note:

Dear Reader: I am obsessed, I have to admit. Obsessed with Eve, temptation, love and sin, love and death, love and madness, with the dark side of love. I've made it a point to explore my obsessions, so please forgive me if my characters are *sometimes* not your every day heroes and heroines, nor the endings the ones you would expect. No one said love was easy...

THE FORGOTTEN BRIDE

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The tragedy hit the news the evening of August 1995. Everyone in Arizona and possibly the whole United States heard about it. The shocking news took the country by storm. A young, hopeful, blushing bride, the only daughter of one of the most prominent businessmen in Phoenix, left at the altar by her boyfriend of two years and driven by despair to throw herself, in her wedding dress, from the top floor window of room 2408 at the Hotel Dupont, where the reception was to have been held. The groom, Hugh Blackwell, a young man with a dark past, had not been found. He'd been last seen the night before the wedding, kissing the bride goodnight before he'd disappeared. Speculation was plenty. A week after the tragedy, a letter arrived at the doorstep of what used to be her home.

It made the headlines.

A love letter, written by the groom, on the eve of their wedding. Gossipers claimed it was false, a scam from newspapers and magazines to sell copies, but nothing could be proved.

My Elizabeth,

I know what you must be thinking right now. You must hate me for what I've done, and I don't blame you. I hate myself, too. I'm a coward. I didn't have the strength to tell you. I lied to you, Lizzy. I lied to you, and to your family. I'm not the man you think I am. My parents didn't die in a car crash. I was ashamed, didn't want you to meet them, and know who I really am, and how unworthy I am of you. My parents are both from the other side of the city, a side that you—with your smiles and loving family— have never seen. I grew up stealing, fighting in the streets, and drinking. I didn't graduate from college. The money I have is from hustling in the streets, and is not worthy of clothing you, or feeding you.

It all started as a game, Lizzy. You looked so innocent that day, drenched in rain, futilely trying to change your car tire. I remember your face perfectly, and the way you looked at me, as if I were your hero, because I fixed your tire. I wondered what it would

be like to be with someone like you. And I didn't have to wonder long, because you fell into my arms in a way I would have never expected.

I never imagined someone could complete me like you do. I never imagined I could even feel something as pure as this love.

And yet you, though you gave yourself to me, selflessly so, you don't love me, you cannot, Lizzy, because I never let you know me. I'm not who you think I am.

I am leaving, my love. I must! I must go away, and hell or heaven, I'm coming back a different man. A better man, for real this time. A man like the man you met, the man that you fell in love with, a man worthy of you and your sweet love. I'm taking with me every single memory of you, every detail of your face, and every touch of your hands—hopefully it will give me strength I need.

I need that strength, the strength of your love, because at this moment I feel as though I'm ripping my heart out of my chest and it burns, and I swear that I could die from this pain. But I want to live, live for you, to love you. And when I prove myself, prove to myself I am worthy, I will return, and I'm going to win you back. This I promise you. I will return for you. And I will make you love me, forgive me, no matter what happens. I will always love you. Always.

Yours forever, Hugh

After the whole country read the letter, the situation at the Hotel Dupont worsened. Visitors at the hotel claimed to have seen the bride, at the window of room 2408, and more and more visitors reported strange happenings in such hotel. Several visitors claimed to have felt saddened during their stay in the hotel, and in numerous occasions people on the twenty-fourth floor were hospitalized and diagnosed with severe depression. In an effort to bring business back to normal, the hotel management closed all access (including that of the employees) to the twenty-fourth floor, but things didn't improve. Even at the hotel lobby the sounds of the bride's sobs frequently echoed against the marbled walls, scaring people senseless. The place went out of business and closed its doors on May 1996.

For years it remained untouched. Forgotten.

Until a man appeared at the steps of the grand, faltering hotel with a large black travel suitcase in tow. He was young and light-skinned, with coal black hair and eyes, and impeccably dressed in formal attire, as if he were assisting a grand event.

No one saw him disappear inside the hotel swivel doors.

No one, except the figure that watched from above, behind the window of room 2408.

The elevators were out of service and sealed with yellow tape, so the man took the stairs up to the twenty-fourth floor with slow, sure footsteps.

Someone was expecting him.

A woman, and she had been waiting for him for years. She hadn't been sure if he'd ever come, but she hoped that he would, and she would have waited for an eternity.

It was with sweaty palms that he opened the creaky door to room 2408. The room was large and spacious, and very dirty. There was dust everywhere. The floral room wallpaper was lifting up from the edges, and there were water spots from humidity in some areas of the walls. The center of the room had a big bed with thick wood poles that almost reached the ceiling. There were cracks slithering all through the white ceiling, and a round, shadowed mirror hung above the bed. The drapes on the sides of the bed were dusty, the fabric looped around the poles. He stared and caught his breath at the big gloomy window leading to the balcony, facing the street.

The window.

"Elizabeth?" he said, his voice barely audible. There was no reply. He set down his suitcase against a bed pole, and walked towards the window. His footsteps echoed, and came back louder in an attempt to scare him. Slowly, he bent his head and pressed his forehead against the cold glass at the same time he spread a palm over it.

"Lizzy, my love," he whispered. Pain chiseled his features like a knife.

He felt her here, in this room. He couldn't see her but he felt her. For hours he sat over the bed, waiting to see her, but she didn't come. His mind was busy, remembering little details of the times he'd spent with her, of their life together.

He remembered the way she had several kinds of smiles. When she was shy, her lips shook at the ends. When she was faking it, her smile was stiff on her face. And then,

her seductive smile was slow, soft, and moist – for she used to lick her lips in silent invitation. When she was deliriously, outrageously happy, it was about a mile long.

The last time he'd seen her deliriously, outrageously happy, was when he'd proposed marriage to her. They'd been in his apartment, making love, because Lizzy's parents were old fashioned, and thought she should be a virgin until she marry. Lizzy hadn't been a virgin when he'd met her, she told him she'd lost it to a man who'd promised her heaven and didn't deliver. A man like him, he supposed. A liar, and a cheat, who'd do anything to get his hands on a beautiful woman, and wouldn't think twice about leaving her.

But Hugh hadn't expected on falling in love with her. In fact, Hugh didn't even believe in love. He'd thought love was for rich people, people without problems, who had the time to smile and laugh and play. Love wasn't for drunk people, lazing out on the street, fighting, stealing. Poor people only loved one thing, and that was what they couldn't have : money. But when you had money, you had the freedom to love something else *besides* it.

Hugh had stolen Lizzy's engagement ring. It was a ring with a huge sparkly rock, that should be worth a fortune, and when he'd stolen it from the old lady who'd been wearing it, he'd planned to sell it. He kept it for months, and every night he'd take it out from a stash he hid under his bed, and looked at it.

The day he took Lizzy to his home, he'd tried to make the place look regal, even though it was quite humble. But he'd cleaned it and overwhelmed it with flowers so that she wouldn't notice the drapes were torn, nor the floor scratched, nor the furniture soiled. He'd built a palace, just so he could make love to her properly. When he went by to see her at her home, there too many watchful eyes on them, and though they kissed and touched each other, they were never fully able to enjoy. But how Hugh wanted her.

Lizzy's eyes had shone with tears as he guided her through his apartment and towards his bed.

"Hugh, it's beautiful," she'd said in a breathless, shaky voice.

And then he was all over her, tearing off her beautiful, expensive clothes only to bare her soft white skin so he could lick her, kiss her, taste her, bite her. She met his passion equally, with full abandon, clawing at his back, biting at his lower lip when they

kissed. He drank the sweet, honeyed nectar between her legs, sucked it into his mouth, then thrust himself inside her, again and again until they both cried in ecstasy.

After they recovered, they made love again, however this time, there was no rush, and they were playful, kissing, teasing, stroking, caressing. He loved the way her eyes misted in passion when he made love to her, the way her breath tore from her chest and bathed his face in warmth, the way her scent would cling into his body, allowing him to smell her even when he was no longer inside her.

Elizabeth was not old fashioned like her parents at all. In fact, as they continued their visits to his apartment, she kept surprising Hugh with unexpected naughty desires. One time she'd brought a huge dildo and said she wanted to slide it inside her pussy while he fucked her from behind. She wanted to feel two cocks inside her at the same time. Hugh went wild in ecstasy: he had never fucked this way. He took her from behind, ramming into her ass full force, while she sunk the dildo inside her pussy. Every time she took it out he noticed it was wet with her arousal, and it drove him crazy. He cupped her breasts, pumped into her, watching intently as she thrust the dildo inside her so that he would thrust himself inside her at the same time, and retreated it in unison. Her sounds were primal, animal, sheer glorious, and so loud that he had to cover her mouth with his hand, only she bit him, hard, as she sunk the dildo inside her, and he pounded into her ass, until they both came. That night he stuck his hand inside his bed, pulled out the stash, and gave her the ring.

Hugh felt feverish remembering, and he lay back down on the bed, dribblets of sweat clinging to his temple. His breathing was harsh, and he was feeling so ill, and so in need of her. He hadn't had another woman ever since. If he couldn't have Lizzy, he wouldn't have anyone.

He fell asleep shortly afterwards, while staring up at the dirty soiled mirror above the bed, his eyes drifted shut. He dreamed about her; he was naked and sweaty, with a rock hard erection aiming high for the ceiling. He felt hands and caresses over his body, and yet when he strained to see through the darkness, he saw no one. But he felt hands and lips on his erection, teasing, taunting. He felt hands on his chest, shoulders, lips, suckling his nipples. It was an exquisite pleasure, to feel the fleeting, soft caresses, as if a feather were touching him, only he knew, he knew it was his love, and he let her. She

touched him everywhere, but did not give him the orgasm he so craved, as when he was about to reach it several times she withdrew, only to come back to touch him long minutes afterwards. She was punishing him, and he let her, because he did deserve her punishment, and in fact this sweet torture felt like heaven to him now.

He bolted upright on the bed, awake now, sweating. He rapidly drew in his breaths to both calm his heart and his aching, rock-hard arousal. He then removed his jacket, rolled up the sleeves of his shirt and walked towards the window again, forcing himself to relax. He would see her soon.

He would see her soon.

He glanced at his watch and it was two a.m. The moon was almost full, and the city was asleep, except for the faint distant sounds of a few car motors from afar. He closed his eyes and willed her to please, please come for him. “Don’t leave me, baby,” he whispered to the window. “Come to me.”

He felt her reach out and touch his shoulder.

He whirled around to face her and when he did, his breath left him completely.

She was beautiful.

As beautiful as he remembered, or more so, because she was in her wedding dress, wearing a lovely white tulle veil, tiers and tiers of fabric falling below her waist and towards the floor. Her face, an angel’s face, was pale, but her lips were rosy, and her blue eyes bright. Hugh’s heart rammed against his chest so hard he could have burst as he thought, *This is my Lizzy. This is my woman.* But she was vaporous, her image was. Fleeting. Only a wisp of the woman she had been.

“Hugh,” she said softly.

Her voice was like music to his ears. He felt dazed, to be finally standing here before her, that he could scarcely speak or move. His heart felt heavy on his chest, as if she were squeezing it, punishing it with her little hands, for leaving her.

For lying.

He broke down just by seeing her. A ghost, his Elizabeth. “Oh, baby, I’m sorry,” he said aching. He put his hands on his face as the tears streamed down his cheeks. “I’m so sorry...so sorry.”

“You forgot me, Hugh.”

“No,” he said furiously, and shook his head in emphasis. “Never!” His eyes were bright red as he held back the tears and looked up at her.

He made a move to touch her but she stepped back. He moved again and she moved back yet another time, elusive to his touch.

“Why did you do this to yourself, Lizzy? Why didn’t you wait for me?” he accused, his voice torn and hurting.

She looked at him with her beautiful blue eyes. She seemed so calm, and yet the look in her eyes was wild with fury, pain and longing. And he knew, he knew she was hurting, too. He reached out for her and yet his hand went right through her waist. He felt frantic when he tried again and couldn’t touch her, his hands touching air.

“Why didn’t you wait for my letter, Elizabeth?” he demanded once again, desperate.

Her hands turned to fists at her sides, and they shook in anger. “Because you weren’t supposed to send a letter. You were supposed to show up at the church and marry me, and yet you *left* me there! You abandoned me. Forgot me. I thought you loved me!” she shouted. Her voice echoed in the lonely hotel walls, repeating itself with more force when it came back to haunt him. And there was so much hurt in her voice that it tore at him.

“I *do*. I love you, with all my heart I do. I just needed to prove myself, do something good for you, get a decent job, so I could give you everything that you deserve! I wasn’t worthy of you, Lizzy. I lied to you and deceived you. I wasn’t worthy of you...I’m *still* not worthy of you.”

“You had plenty of time to tell me this, why couldn’t you? I would have forgiven you anything, *anything*! You shouldn’t have left me!” Her voice broke. “Half hour after you didn’t arrive Daddy told me we should go. But I couldn’t go...I waited at the altar for *five* hours...And you just left me.”

“No,” he said sternly. “*You left me* here alone. I was fighting for you, for me, for our future together.”

There was a long silence, until he said, “I’ve gone on and made some money for us. Here.” He opened the big black suitcase, filled with wads and wads of money. Green

money. Real money. Honest money. “This was for you. To get you anything you want, a house, a car.”

“I never asked for your money, Hugh.”

He shook from the rage and threw the money at her. “Take it, Elizabeth!”

“I don’t want the money, I just wanted *you*,” she said, her pale white face shining with wet tears.

The money flew in the air like feathers between them, and they watched it flutter to the floor.

“And I, only you,” he whispered brokenly. Sobs racked him, his whole body shuddered as he buried his face in his hands and cried his soul out. His heartbroken sobs echoed in the dreary room with a fury, the pain tearing from his chest in a desperate, yearning cry.

She moved slowly and enveloped him in her arms. Hugh stopped crying when he realized he could feel her arms around him, cold but gentle. He turned to look at her eyes.

“Take me with you, Lizzy. I can’t bear to live without you.”

“I couldn’t bear to live without you either.” She rested her chin on the top of his hair. “I’ve been waiting for you to come to me.”

He pulled back and looked at her with all the love in his eyes. “I’m here. Take me. Take me with you.”

She was silent, eyeing him in hesitation. “No, Hugh,” she whispered.

“I promise to love you for all eternity,” he whispered savagely. “Please. I beg you. If you don’t I’ll do it myself.”

He bent and stuck his hand in the bottom of the briefcase and pulled out a gun. He held it in his hand, cocking back the safety, his gaze crazed and desperate. “From the moment I heard you died I wanted to die, too. But when I heard people said they’d seen you, it made me stay and work and fight even more, in order to come back here and make things right. But I don’t want to live anymore, not without you, baby,” he whispered.

Then she touched him, and he felt her hands, her very real hands, on his face. “Leave that for now,” she whispered. He set the gun down on the bed.

“Lizzy,” he breathed as he cupped her face with his palms and kissed her with all the hunger, pain and hurt he felt. He kissed her as if he were dying for it. His mouth

hungry over hers, and she responded in kind. “Hugh, I’ve missed you so much, I’ve been so lonely,” she said in a painful voice.

“I won’t leave you again, Lizzy, I promise you,” he said, his words fierce and determined.

It took him several minutes to get her out of the wedding dress; it had so many buttons on the back, and layers and layers of cloth. She giggled when she was finally naked and in his arms, his cock pressing against the swell of her back. For a moment he knew she was outrageously, overwhelmingly happy, for he saw her smile. Hugh knew perfectly well how she liked it.

And she liked it like this.

Hugh carefully placed her face down on the bed and caressed her buttocks with his hands, then slowly stroked his erection down her back, spread her buttocks apart and inserted a finger into her little ass.

Lizzy tensed, moaned at his intrusion. He inserted another finger into her wet sex and she moaned, bringing her knees up on the bed and stretching her arms, assuming a four-legged position in order to give him more access. He knelt behind her, teased her with his fingers, then slid his cock up and down her two entrances. His hands came to cup her breasts, which were dangling tauntingly as he pressed his cock against her body.

Suddenly he turned her around, spread her legs wide, and bent down to taste her with his mouth. She tasted sweet and beautiful, a taste that he well remembered, and he licked her with desperate passion and hunger. She moaned, and her painful wanton sounds echoed in the empty walls of the hotel. Then he fiercely thrust her legs up to her face and rammed into her, then thrust into her again and again with a frenzy, until they both came, shuddered in unison, and fell asleep on the bed.

“I owed you our wedding night,” he whispered as he slowly drifted to sleep.

She woke him up during the night several times.

Once, his eyes fluttered open and she was naked and on top of him, straddling his body with her hips. He could feel every inch of her skin as she moved her hips on top of his. He could feel the muscles inside her clench around his cock, feel his erection deep inside her as she moved, slowly, in a painfully seductive rhythm. Her breasts bounced before his face, tempting him, and yet he could not find the energy to touch them. He felt

drained, powerless to move. He moaned and moved his head from side to side at her assault, the pleasure so intense he could barely stand it.

“Come with me, Hugh,” she whispered, and then he exploded into a thousand pieces. When he came to his senses she had disappeared into thin air, and he was left panting and dazed.

The next time she woke him, it was with her sex all over his face. When he opened his eyes he could see her lips and her silky curls above him, and even in his sleep he had been tasting the sweet honey she offered, her scent intoxicating. He was weak, powerless to move. It was as if she were slowly draining the life away from him. He drank her in like a drunkard, like a man in the middle of the desert with no food or water, he drank her in until he lost his senses.

The third time he woke he found her sitting on her haunches over the bed beside him, looking down at him lovingly while she stroked his length, while her other hand softly caressed his sensitive balls.

“Do you want this Hugh,” her childlike voice echoed in the room. “Does it feel good?” God it felt good. “I’ve missed you, Hugh. I’ve missed you.”

Even if he’d wanted her to stop her he wouldn’t have been able to, since he felt drained, weaker and weaker every time they made love. Before he knew it she was caressing the folds around his cock with her lips and tongue, while her hands cupped his balls, weighed them, teased them, then caressed the skin slowly with her thumbs. He moaned, closed his eyes shut at this incredible assault, and when he opened his eyes again, he saw them in the mirror.

There were three of her.

All over on him, sucking and licking, hands rubbing, stroking everywhere on his body, burning his skin, pleasing and torturing him, and the sensation was sheer ecstasy. He watched in the mirror and saw her, three times, her breasts, lips, buttocks, mouth, all over him. Lips sucked his lips, his balls, and his dick, hands touched him, rubbed him, and he came again, this time in a nerve shattering explosion that took him to a sweet, dark oblivion. Until he knew nothing more except her.

A drunk homeless who'd been secretly sleeping in a lower floor of the hotel found his limp body the following morning. He'd heard noises the night before, but had been so drunk he couldn't seem to get to his feet. Until now...

After a thorough examination, the cause of death was confirmed to have been a natural one, and a fingerprint revealed the man to be one male Caucasian by the name of Hugh Blackwell. A few weeks later, the drunk who had found him purchased the hotel with the money he had found in the suitcase. He thoroughly renovated it, left it sparkling clean and new.

He called it 'The Blackwell'.

Room 2408 was turned into a suite. The new owner called it the 'Honeymoon Suite' and it is off-limits to visitors, for he claims it is currently occupied, and is booked for all eternity. People from around the world have been lured by the hotel and its secrets, and now the Blackwell thrives in business, and for the tenth year in a row has been sold out on Halloween night. There are still sightings of the couple, mostly sounds of laughter. People who sleep in the twenty fourth floor near the 'Honeymoon Suite' can hear the couple's lovemaking at nights echo in the walls of their rooms. Most visitors can hear them, and some can even see them. The forgotten bride, and her groom.