

The Treasure of the Deep

By Nimaat Arefin....

“Persephone, dear, help dad load the bags and our baggage and help Emily of course. Poor thing’s doing all the big work.” My mom said. “ ‘Kay mom!” Oh, I forgot to introduce myself I’m Persephone Lilac Walker and if there’s one thing I hate, well used to hate, it’s ghosts. They’re annoying, weird and incredibly cold as if you just got dunked with a bucket of ice, ice, ice-cold water.

It was April 23rd, 2008 and my annoying cousin Emily was playing with the three paper dolls I had made her. One was me with my thick, long light blond hair neatly tucked in a French braid, Pearl her almost white hair in a heap over her right shoulder, and....a girl she looked about my age with two blond ponytails with a red ‘hairline’ as Emily confirmed but I think she meant a red streak in her hair though, As I was done with Emily’s 3rd paper doll request she suddenly told me “Doesn’t the third girl look like someone drowning?” Emily asked innocently. “I, uh well....” I stammered “No, why Emily?” Emily fixed her gaze on the creek near our Airbnb and then she said “Because....she is.”

After Aunt Amarie gave us dinner I got ready for bed and as soon as I turned the lights off I heard a voice: “She told you about me...didn’t she?” I turned and behind me stood a girl with pale blue eyes, a sharp face, and blond hair with a streak of red that smelt like a dirty lake. “You can call me Amibeth.” I thought. “Wait!” I called after her, but it was too late. Amibeth was a ghost, my long-gone Aunt’s ghost. And she was the spirit of the lake.

The next day I got up went downstairs and found Emily crying. I turned to Emily. “Emily, is the girl I mean spirit of the lake is she....Amibeth?” Emily’s body stiffened she turned to me and nodded. “Her parents never found her, they even made a memorial for her, but she told me she lies where it’s deep, dark and cold and she hates it.” She pointed to the creek that stretched into the river. “There, that’s where the treasure of the deep is buried.” I shivered even though I knew and out of the corner of my eye I saw Amibeth when she saw me she disappeared.... Later at dinner, I asked Aunt Amarie something. “Aunt Amarie did you ever call Amy ‘Amibeth’ before?” her head shot up as if I had insulted her. “I....did.” I looked at her. “Can you tell me how she died?” Aunt Amarie took a long sip of coffee and then she started.... “I was about 10, Amy and I were taunting your mother with doll; she loved Amy threw it into the canoe that our dad built; though it was against the rules to get in without an adult. But I was really jealous of your mom at that time. She was so sweet everyone liked her better than me so I decided to make sure Amy liked me better and....” She pulled a picture out of her

pocket it was 3 blond girls 2 were smiling the other was crying. "And I suddenly got tired of everything your mom, the doll, and even Amy so I started towards the canoe the fog suddenly rose and the canoe tipped over I didn't know that would happen I was trying to just throw it in the creek then nobody had the doll but then Amy lunged for the doll and she fell where the waters were...." She paused, I looked at her and she said, "Deep, and dark and dangerous." " We called and called for her until our voices were hoarse. But then a few days ago, Amibeth gave the doll to Emily, and the nightmare started all over again. "So is Amibeth the girl we called Amy?" I looked her dead in the eyes and said, "I think we both know...."

That night I longed for my parents and for them to come back from their trip.

When I went upstairs Amibeth was back she looked at me and said "She told you didn't she? It's not fair everyone gets to grow up but I stay the same. I wasn't even buried properly like that sparrow was." She went to my window "All I longed for was to be buried under that memorial of an angel. Is that too much to ask for?" "Don't worry," I said. "I told Aunt Amarie about burying you properly if you could tell us where your bones were...."

The diver was already looking where I told him the bones were and he was taking forever to find her, at last he swam to the surface and yelled, "I don't know how, but the kids were right!"

A few days later after the funeral, Emily and I picked wild flowers and walked into the cemetery, a dash of sunlight or two brightened the memorial.