

Chapter 1

Elizabeth

I met a man today, his name was Time. I suppose I can't really say we met, for that implies we interacted. We did not. I simply watched him all day, and the more I watched, the more I felt like I knew him.

His hair was young, thick, and soft like honey, but grey, an unusual complement to a twenty-six year old, but I suppose a man who has lived since the beginning, could choose the way he wanted to look. His eyes, blue. Competing with the depth and beauty of the ocean, and complementing the aura of the sky. He wore a white shirt under a light grey vest, or mid spectrum, to be exact, with six buttons paralleled down the lining of his stomach. Over

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them was his darker-shade of a grey jacket, but still along the mid spectrum of the color. The slim fit suit was decorated with a deep blue handkerchief on his left chest, matching the blue on his tie that pushed up against the beating pulse of his neck. His shoes were the darkest shade of black. Perhaps, it would be safer to say that they were beyond the shade and seemed to resemble the essence of the color, itself, for they encaptured the beauty of darkness so pure it seemed too surreal to be but a mere shade subjective to but another accessory. He did not wear the shoes, the shoes wore him. They had a Derby Dress, Italian, genuine black leather design, with articulate designs engraved all along the sides, so purposeful it was as if they were drawn by the wind.

He did not wear a watch on his wrist, but rather carried a pocket watch that dangled from a silver, iron chain. Roman numeral numbers danced around the inside of the case. The outer part of the case was consumed by the same designs of his shoes, also seeming to echo the language of the wind. He held the chain like it was a part of him. It moved as he moved. It breathed as he breathed. It roamed as he roamed with the same will of mind that captivated the world. He spun it around in circled rotations, and he and the clock never stopped moving. So there he was, in broad daylight, walking around a bench with a view of the Seattle lake, with grey hair, blue eyes, a grey suit, silver watch and a glass heart. Or so, that is what appeared. For he was a being who showed no compassion to anyone or anything. Someone who never paused a moment for anyone. Wasn't he?

I watched him, but I also watched everyone around him. And no one stopped once for him, either. No person

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stopped to greet him, to understand him. To see beyond the glass heart their perceptions were prisoners to. They all murmured along the stringed line of the screaming silence that encircled his presence. *There's not enough Time, it's not fair, or Time is passing too slowly, or why can't I turn back Time and change things?* Everyone was judging something they could not understand. If only they could imagine, that Time showed compassion, and that that very compassion seemed to be the death of him. And it took such a strong essence to stand tall and not let his emotions get in the way of his job. If you stop every moment of Time to fit every humans' need, the world would cease to go on. So how could he choose which requests to accept--which people to bend the rules for? Which mother could get another hour with her son. Or which man could go back in Time to marry the right woman. Which situation to erase in history—which murder or battle fought in vain. How could he choose who had the *right* to bend the strings of Time that were sewn and sewn to make his being? He did not. And so, his steps were as constant as the angry eyes that followed his path, but unlike what everyone seemed to believe, he saw everything, felt everything. But even in the pain he felt for everyone else's sadness, he kept walking. For he knew that he was one thing in such an imperfect world that must not fall into the trap of pleasing others, for he could not please everyone. So the only thing he could do was be an anchor, a baseline. A constant. And even though he was an anchor, he rose everyone up from the ashes they would have been limited to. For if Time could go on through everything, they could too.

I watched people judge him and dwell and dwell, but I also watched those people let it go, walk away, and go

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on with their lives. Never stopping. And there he was, a man with a glass heart, holding the world together, even though he was in pieces.

I went to see him again today, Time. He seemed limitless. The moments I saw him as I was standing alone, seemed to last forever, digging into my soul with every fragment of his being. Yet, it all passed in a blink. People judged him for their incapability to control a clock, but the truth is, I seemed to discover that they do, indeed, have control. The ground beneath his feet felt his steps to its core, whereas the core of the earth may have sensed him, but Time was too insignificant to focus on the steps. Everything encountered him in a different way, so in a sense, controlling the interactions with Time made him subjective to each mind.

There was a little child, running around the park behind the lake. Past the twin set of swings, made of old metal that began to rust at the top. She ran past the pit of sand where kids were building castles, and over the hills where boys her age were playing soccer. She was about eight years old, with pigtails on either side of her curved ears, melting into her angelic being. Her pure heart fueled her laughter with a contagious type of happiness, as she was running around everywhere. She found herself admiring a sparrow, light brown at its core with golden stripes armouring its perfection. Its darkened black beak held by a yellow-golden border, flowing into the golden cheeks that differentiated him to her from all else. She walked towards the lake, with Time pacing at her left, but

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she was so lost in the moment that she did not even acknowledge the minutes passing by, and the whole concept of Time seemed to escape her mind. Time saw me as I noticed his admiration for the little girl. With a confused facial expression, he turned his head as he kept walking the lines of his circled path, spinning the chain around his hand. His eyebrows rose upwards towards each other, and I immediately turned to my left, surrendering all of my focus to the ground beneath me, as I walked away from him.

I looked at a young man in black, returning from a wedding that he should not have allowed to occur in the first place. His eyes, red, as if to show how his heart was bleeding. He walked on the trail near the park, and stopped to stare at Time, meters and meters away. The man in black was breathing heavily, but his world was passing as slow as ever, with the pressure against his arteries moving with the pace that Time walked. One, two, three... every single second was felt in a certain depth that made him feel dead. It was poison for his mind, for he kept thinking, beating himself up for letting a person he loved get away. He was meters away from Time, but he felt the moments pass by with every fiber of his hollow being. Whereas the young, little girl, walked right next to Time, but the minutes passed by without her feeling a moment of it.

People can control Time, not in the sense that they rewind him or push him forward, but they control their perception, and it only depends on who they choose to be in respect towards him. The center of the earth, miles away, or the handkerchief that feels the constant beat of his heart, second after second, drowning in the music of his infinite movement.