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Memory and Moonlight

 Maggie Madison thrived on ambition. She was thirty-three years old and lived life on the razor’s edge. Maggie had always been attractive. She was a redhead and full of zest. Maggie was slim, and she loved to wear fashionable clothing. She adored anything designer and was always on the hunt for vintage designer purses. The year was 2024. It was spring, and New York City was buzzing. Maggie’s aspirations were always the number one thing in her life; they kept her going in good and rough times. She worked at a fashion magazine called Dress to Impress You. Maggie had a seven-year-old daughter named Meredith. Meredith was the spitting image of her mom; she had short red hair and freckles and was adorable.

 Maggie had already dropped her off at school and was running late to the office. Today was a day just like any other day, except it wasn’t. Maggie’s life was about to change forever. Maggie was driving the Porsche and stopped at the red light. She turned on the radio while she waited and didn’t pay attention to what was happening at the light. Maggie lifted her head to the sound of scraping metal that sounded like a shrill oncoming train. A log had dislodged from a log truck up ahead. An eighteen-wheeler caused the truck to be flung backward by the impact. Maggie never saw it coming. Her life didn’t flash before her eyes. There was no fanfare, no parade. She closed her eyes, as if she could stop it.

After that, she remembered nothing. She felt nothing. She was nothing. She felt herself floating away and was afraid to open her eyes.

 Maggie was as light as a floating feather.

 ‘Where am I?’ said Maggie.

 Maggie looked down from her feet and didn’t see land below her. Everything around her was white. She knew she was floating. She continued to drift forward. Maggie didn’t know how far she traveled but knew when she arrived. She came to an abrupt stop, in front of two yellow doors. Maggie couldn’t put her finger on it, but she had a strange feeling that what was behind these doors were a part of her and reached out to touch the first one. It was locked. She tried both, and both were locked.

 ‘Why am I here? Who’s running this show? I want to go home,’ said Maggie.

 “Home is where the heart is! You must choose your destiny, or have it chosen or you. Hurry up; you don’t have much time left,” said an unknown voice. Maggie slowly turned the knob of the first door. She pushed the door open with all the caution of a mother bathing her newborn for the first time. Once the door was open, a powerful mist came from the clouds of this new world. It enveloped Maggie so completely that her senses were blurred. She closed her eyes and once she dared to, open found herself floating above water once she dared to open them to see where she was going.

 Maggie let out a silent scream. She didn’t have control over her hearing or vocal cords. Maggie was unaware how long or far she traveled. Was it days? weeks? She couldn’t’ tell. She felt herself floating down over a hillside. Her hearing and voice came back to her, thank God. Maggie quickly realized she have been far away from a town. The woods were thick with trees as far as the eye could see. She reached out and tried to touch one, her hand went right through it. Maggie screamed as shrilly as a train whistle.

 ‘What’s going on here? Why am I here? I don’t know where I am,’ said Maggie. She clutched her person, and her hands went right through her chest. Maggie felt herself being pushed forward again. Her body was moving as fast as a crow flies. She saw a trailer down below her. She was willed toward the ground. Maggie realized her mom was moving from the trailer. Boxes lay askew everywhere on the front porch. Two children were playing on the swing set nearby. Maggie didn’t recognize them. She felt her body begin to shrink. Maggie had become a child and looked like she was five years old. She still had her grown-up mind.

 Maggie’s mom motioned her toward the playground where two kids were playing. Maggie sat on a swing beside an eager looking boy.

 “Hi, I’m-Michael. What’s your name?” said Michael.

 “My name is Maggie,” said Maggie.

 “It’s nice to meet you, Maggie. This is Mandy,” said Michael. Michael pointed to a small girl next to him with brown with brown hair and green eyes next to him?” asked Mandy.

 “I’m from New York City,” said Maggie.

 “You mean the Big Apple?” asked Michael.

 “The one and only. What town is it that were in?”

 “This is Hepzibah, Georgia. It’s not very big,” said Michael.

 “What year is it?” asked Maggie.

 “1996,” said Mandy.

 “Are you sure you didn’t bump your head Maggie?” asked Michael.

 “You have no idea,” said Maggie.

 Mandy and Michael stared at her with eyes that popped out and were wider than saucers. She started off slowly and gained more speed like a daredevil. The other two were swinging, too. They were competing to see who would go faster. Michael gave one final push and landed on his feet, making the dirt below him billow in the breeze. Maggie was being called home. She said her goodbyes and raced inside with her mom.

 After Maggie and her mom ate dinner, she was tucked into bed. As Maggie lay in the dark, she heard a still, small voice.

 “Maggie, tomorrow I want you to choose between Michael and Mandy to take back to the portal. Michael will be the one you love, and Mandy will be your best friend. Choose wisely; you won’t get a re-do. I know you may not understand now, but you will.” said the voice. Maggie felt herself nod off to an unknown world.

She had a dream of her and Michael’s future life together. She knew he was her person and wanted to keep him forever. How was she supposed to tell Michael? She would be sent away to the looney bin. Michael would run away in fear. Maybe the mysterious voice would help her now.

After breakfast, she went to the playground and found Michael swinging alone on the swing set. She tapped him fiercely on his shoulder. As her finger landed on his shoulder, a strange thing occurred. Time was frozen like a clock frozen in the sands of time. Michael was frozen, too. Before Maggie could blink, a gust of wind came up like a hungry, roaring lion. It took Maggie and Michael away to the holding world instantaneously.

Maggie saw Michael become unfrozen. Michael looked like he was her age now. He had beautiful black hair, and he was tall and attractive. She was back to her correct size and age.

“Michael, I can explain everything. I almost died the other day. I still don’t know if I’m dead now, but I know you and I have a future together, and that’s why we must go to the next door together. It will take us to our next world. I believe it will be our future. If you trust me, you’ll understand soon enough,” said Maggie.

“I trust you Maggie, as crazy as that sounds. I’m ready to know more about you. I like you. We didn’t have much of a childhood together; maybe our future will be brighter,” said Michael.

Maggie and Michael shoved the door open with an alarming force. They were swept swiftly off their feet and fell to the ground like a bird knocked from its nest. Maggie spit dirt out of her mouth.

“Pwah!” said Maggie

“Do you think Mandy will be ok, Michael? Do you think we’ll ever see her again?” asked Maggie.

“She’ll turn up, just like you did,” said Michael.

“I have a feeling we’ll only be allowed to spend a short time here too, Michael,” said Maggie.

“Let’s make it count,” said Michael.

“Look, there’s a house up ahead,” said Maggie.

“I have a feeling it’s ours Maggie,” said, Michael.

The two raced inside to see what it looked like. As soon as Maggie flung open the front door, she heard a gigantic Surprise!

“What’s the surprise?” shouted Michael.

“Your twentieth wedding anniversary, silly,” said Mandy.

Maggie and Michael looked at their hands and realized how much older they were.

“Where have the years flown to?” asked Michael.

“Will you excuse us for a second? We must find something in the kitchen,” said Maggie.

Maggie yanked Michael into the kitchen.

“Michael, robots are flying around everywhere in here. There seems to be a flying holographic phone for everyone here,” said Maggie.

The couple looked down at the counter where their picture was in two passports. They had flown worldwide together- from Italy to Jamaica to London and everywhere in between. Both their jaws dropped through the tiled floor. Four refrigerator magnets on the fridge said Oregon.

“That must be where we are, Maggie. We’ve had a wonderful life together. That’s what we wanted, right?” asked Michael.

As soon as Michael had uttered those words, Maggie blinked, and they were back in the holding world. There were no doors now, only a demon named Mitchell. Unbeknownst to Maggie, he had slipped out of her past to find her.

“I’ll take you straight to hell Maggie,” said Mitchell. You think you’re more powerful than me, do you?” asked Mitchell.

Maggie knew she must decide her identity. Was it back in NYC? Her Past? Or with Michael, her future? She must follow her heart. She knew that time was running out. She heard a voice rise like a lion.

“Maggie, remember who you are. You don’t have to pick. Just be yourself, and it will all fall into place,” said the voice.

Maggie closed her eyes and fell into a dream. In the dream, she and Michael had found peace and were in heaven with the rest of her family. They were all holding hands. They were dressed in costumes as giant butterflies. They were singing in unison. The only two words she could capture were Memory and Moonlight. They sang to the Father, the Lord of Lords, King of Kings. A light so powerful shone like a thousand suns upon them. A breeze came from the voice of the Father, and he was speaking to his people. Maggie didn’t want to leave. This was her future. This was what she lived for, her whole world. It was all clear to Maggie now.

The dream shifted again, and she and Michael stood in a castle overlooking millions of people dressed in costumes. Michael was telling her who everyone was because she couldn’t see over the side wall of the castle.

“Meanie,” he said.

Maggie grinned and said, “Meanness.”

Maggie opened her eyes and found the demon was trying to pull her back into door number one again.

“Get off of me, you lech!” screamed Maggie.

“I’ve decided, Lord, I want my future to be with you, and I’ll let the rest of the chips fall where they may. I choose you, Meredith, and Michael,” shouted Maggie.

Maggie blinked, and she and Michael were back in her NYC apartment with Meredith. They were all sitting on the couch watching television.

“My baby, where have you been all my life?” asked Maggie.

“Are you ok, Mom?” said Meredith.

“Dad, she must be hitting the sauce hard again,” said Meredith.

Maggie shoved a finger over Michael’s lips. She kissed him with a deep, longing kiss. She leaned in close to whisper in his ear.

“Looks like we’ve got all we’ve ever wanted, meanness,” said Maggie.

“You’d be correct meanie,” said Michael.

Outside, snow blew like a train whistle to the tune of Moonlight.”

A voice whispered on the wind, “Well done my child, well done. I’ll be watching over you.”