

Where The Shadows Lie

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In a community where magic has been forbidden for generations, a young, part-elven girl- Maliwen-see's something strange near The Forest. Maliwen seeks this strange thing- a heavenly light- for days after, until something horrible happens... Her home is

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Chapter One: The Light

A soft breeze blew through my blonde hair as I sat, staring intently, near the edge of the forest. Shadows of the dark trees were cast onto the soft complexion of my face, yet my blue eyes still glittered with light. Suddenly, the undergrowth of the forest rustled. My young mind did not consider the danger of this, and instead, curiosity and excitement overcame me. Could it be the light again? The glowing orb that I had been waiting to see once more?

Magic had been forbidden to the lands on which I, and many others lived for an unknown reason, but I always had a spark of secretive passion towards it. No one had the gift of magic anymore, but still, my village had been taught to never interest themselves in it, but more importantly, *never* to enter the forest that I was sitting in front of at that exact moment. I was not so foolish as to enter it, but I would come as close to it as possible to sit, and wait for the ball of glowing light that I had seen a mere three weeks earlier.

Maliwen! the voice of my mother suddenly came to me, carried by the wind. **Maliwen Kaym Gahmare!**

Her voice was not kind and soft like usual, but instead cold and angry. My curiosity held my gaze on the spot where I had seen rustle, but I eventually got up to run swiftly back to the small but beautiful hut I called home. My mother had called my full name, which my sister and I had referred to as my trouble name . I knew the reason why my mother had summoned me, and I knew that I was not in for a treat. I always went to the field to play, but ever since I had seen the Light, as I called it, I had gone further than usual, and stayed out longer, not playing, but waiting. My mother expected that I was up to something, and I was actually surprised that I had not gotten in trouble with her earlier.

I finally came to the house in which I lived. It was made of a beautiful Elvin wood that was actually quite common. There were no distinctive features except for the silver engraved words that glistened above the door: Haven. This was the translation for the Elvin word gahmare, which was also the last name of my family.

I grasped the smooth silver handle of my home's door, twisted it, and pulled it quietly open. I placed one of my bare feet gently onto the floor of my family's house, which was carpeted with a white, cotton-like material. I immediately sighted my mother sitting in a fair-sized chair, staring at me apprehensively. I glanced at my ten-year-old sister, Kitaiyah, for comfort, but she became suddenly interested in an arrangement of flowers and herbs that was standing on a small table. I looked back to my mother innocently, and shuffled my feet slightly.

Y- Yes mommy? I asked guiltily, avoiding my mother's gaze.

Mal, she started, now using my nickname, Where have you been venturing to lately? I've noticed that you've been staying out later lately, and I haven't been able to spot you by the stream. Please Mal, no lies, I need to know if you've been wandering past the stream.

My mother's voice was now not filled with anger, but was stern with fear and worry. A lump of guilt built up in my throat at the mention of the stream. The stream was the boundary of my adventuring, and even it was at half of the distance to The Forest. I had crossed it in search of The Light, and I was just then realizing how serious what I had done was. The elders of our small, spread out community told, not only to the children, that if one got too near to The Forest, that they could endanger their families. I then wanted to cry as I regretted what I had done.

It was all because of that light. That filthy, evil, yet attracting and beautiful light that I had obsessed over. Even I, a mere seven-year-old girl, knew that I had gone too far. I had put my family and I in a terrible danger. My eyes tingled slightly, and I suddenly burst into tears.

I- it was The Light! I sobbed hysterically. I didn't mean to! I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry! I cried repetitively.

Maliwen! my mother shouted over my shrill sobs. She took my hands and knelt down on the floor to get eye-level with me. Maliwen, I need you to tell me what happened! If you went to The Forest then I need to know! For our safety. At the last words, her voice dropped into a near whisper.

At this, Kitaiyah looked around worriedly, and sat down next to our mother nervously. I held back my tears, and explained The Light.

Oh no, my mother whispered, her face twisted with fear. Oh no.

