

The Secret

Ron walked along the damp side walk, the rain had only just stopped and the scent was fresh in the air. The cans of spray paint clinked gently in the bag he had slung over his shoulder. His feet padded softly on the wet concrete, the cold air was like thousands of pins, stabbing him where ever his bare skin showed.

Ron arrived at the site, dropped his paint bag on the ground and stood back to admire what to most, was an ugly old brick wall, but to him was a canvas, waiting to tell a story. He pushed his hood back, revealing his golden hair that shone in the moonlight.

The image had come to him a dream, as many of them did but this one was different, it was so powerful, so beautiful, he hadn't been able to wait for a better time. The image was pulling at his mind, tugging, waiting to be unleashed. He had come straight to this place, although it was a freezing, wet night and no good for graffiti.

Ron picked up a spray can and began. Each stroke, so delicate, like a child's dream, so easy to crush, so easy to destroy. Soon the outline became bolder, the beginning of something bigger.

By the time he was finished the wall was covered from top to bottom with colour, spray cans were scattered from one side of the alley to the other and the clouds were tinged with the beginning of morning.

Ron stood back to admire his work. The painting was of a bird, a sparrow perhaps, Ron wasn't quite sure, but it was a plain bird, brown and black with delicate feathers. The bird was lying on its back, its legs curled up to its chest, the bird looked dead but Ron didn't think so. Emerging from the bird's chest was a big ball of colour, bright splashes, clashing yet melding together like gold. The ball of colour seemed to be lighting up the dead forest around the bird. Dead trees began to grow leaves, the grass turned from brown to green and clouds disappeared. Ron took one last glance before he disappeared with the night.

The next night, Ron felt something was missing, something in the painting, the pull was so strong he got out of bed and gathered up his things. When he got to the site it was almost midnight. But when he turned into the alley he was surprised to see a man standing there, staring up at his art work. When he looked more closely he realised that the man's eyes were closed. Why would someone look at something with their eyes closed, he wondered?

After a while the man moved closer to the wall, slowly he raised his hand to the wall and hesitated slightly before touching it. As he pressed his hand to the wall his eyes flew open, as if coming out of a trance. Slowly, the colour began to flow onto his arm, although the painting still looked exactly the same as it had before. The person turned away from the wall toward Ron, the colour seemed to be eating him, Ron watched as his eyes grew wide with panic and pain. He opened his mouth as if to scream but no sound came out. Slowly, the colour ate him away until there was nothing left.

Ron sat there in a daze, staring blankly at the spot where the man had been standing just moments before, but now all that was left was a smudge of colour. After a while Ron stood up shakily, he moved slowly over to the smudge, it was almost as if the artwork were hypnotising people, drawing them in so that it could eat them away.

Ron looked slowly up at the painting, studying it. "What could I have done to you, little bird, that you could do such a thing?" Ron asked gently to the wall. He stared at it a while longer and became aware of things moving in the background, specks in the distance, moving closer and closer until he could see the specks more clearly. He realised that they were people. As the people came closer, coming out from behind trees, jumping down from clouds, they moved up beside the bird, although they were no bigger than it. They seemed to be looking at him, their eyes looking right through him, they all looked up at the big ball of colour and then back at Ron. As Ron studied the people's faces he realised he recognised one, the man who had just disappeared. Ron realised that the twenty or so people standing, staring out of the painting, moving impatiently within it where all trapped. They were all like the man he had seen disappear.

Ron backed up, trying to tear his glance away from the painting as he realised what was happening to him. He turned his head, but his eyes were still fixed, he turned his body, but his eyes wouldn't budge, he moved his legs, but his eyes wouldn't move with them. Finally he tore his eyes away from the graffiti and when he glanced at it again all the people were gone. He grinned, he knew what to call it, he whipped out a can of paint and sprayed two simple words, "The Secret".

Ron jogged home, thinking about what he had seen, if they were real people getting trapped in that painting he had to do something. He didn't understand, the science he believed in so strongly could never prove something like that, what was wrong with his painting? That painting was a dark secret, there was only one way to free the people and he knew what it was.

The next night, Ron emerged with the moon, creeping with the shadows, hiding in the dark corners of the street. No one could see him, then they would know the secret, the

secret had come to him in a dream. A few weeks ago, he had a dream, he had the dream every night for two weeks straight and each time it would end with hands emerging from bars but he could not see who the hands belonged to because they disappeared into nothing. It appeared that he was outside of the cage and the people inside wanted him to save them. He knew how, but no one else could. Painting with this kind of love and passion only came to a few people. Only those few people could do what he was about to do, but no one could see it, he knew exactly what would happen if they did.

Ron knew what to do when he got to the site. He didn't look at 'The Secret' he didn't want to see the people emerging from the trees and the darkest corners of his deep dark painting. Ron knew what he had to do and he didn't want to think about it.

Ron got out his paint cans and once again the passion flowed through his hands and into the brick wall directly opposite 'The Secret'. Soon enough the outline was bold and bright in the moon light. That moon light that Ron loved so much, the moon light that made his smile glow and his hair shine, the moonlight that lit up the canvas he painted, the moonlight that would be the last moon light he ever saw. Ron turned to the moon, it was full, sitting comfortably in the sky and seemed to be smiling down at him. He sighed and turned to the painting, sometimes, an artist has to do what an artist has to. He smiled, as sad smile and stepped forward.

The man looked around as he got up, he was in a small alley, a headache was pounding in his head and he was slightly dizzy. The alley was covered from head to toe in paint, on one side, there was a painting titled 'The Secret'. It looked familiar and the man could see as he glanced around, others, gathered strangely in this small alley, staring at the scene with the same bewildered look as him.

The little bird lying on its back was so beautiful and the man couldn't imagine who could paint such a thing. He turned slowly to the wall opposite, in this painting there was a forest, it was a beautiful forest, the moon was shining through the trees and the stars lighting up the sky. There was a layer of fog drifting above the ground and in a clearing, floating gently above the fog was a boy. His hair was blonde and his face, grim, yet peaceful, the moonlight made his smile glow and his hair shine. He had his hands raised above his head and floating between them was a ball of colour almost identical to the one above the bird. At the top of the painting there were two words 'For you'.