

Outside it was raining. She looked out her window and knew the world was crying for her. The rain poured down, down, to try and wash away the hurt and flowed like blood down gutters and into sewers where evil grows and the cruelty of the world is multiplied by the stench of a hundred years.

She saw her reflection in the window pane and was surprised to see she was crying. She wasn't crying for herself, she knew. She had no time for self-pity but like the world was crying for her, she cried for the world. She cried for wars and bombs, and crying babies and lies and hate and blood and the dead. She could have cried forever but forever is such a long time when your heart is hurting.

There was no sense in looking at the rain -- it reminded her of tears. And tears reminded her of crying which reminded her of sorrow which reminded her of the cause of all her earthly sorrows -- him.

She could still remember his face when he left. That look she knew from so many times before. He didn't want to hurt her and she tried to pretend he didn't but he did. Her heart was empty and her body longed for his embrace but that was years ago.

She was old now and had no reason for living. He was only one of many who had loved and left her never to return. You got used to it

over the years.

She turned and surveyed the room. It was full of memories. It was a sanctuary from the world and to her it was home.

Time stood still when she was in that room and she could be whatever she wanted to be -- young and carefree, in love and happy but today she was old and wrinkled and tired.

The weariness of the past thousand years seemed to settle on her bones and she was engulfed in a

tears would cease, but for now she needed rest.

She closed the window shades and climbed into bed but she could not sleep for the sobs of the world haunted her. She cursed the rain and tossed and turned but could find no rest.

She went to the window and pulled up the blind and saw that it was still raining. She sighed, lit a cigarette, sat down and stared past the rain-marred window into the night.

-- damn him.

She closed her eyes to try and stop the tearful torrent that she knew was soon to break but all she saw was him. She saw him teetering on the brink of time but he leaned towards the future, and she lay, forgotten in his past. To no avail she begged him to look back. She screamed and cried till fatigue claimed her but he did not come back.

She opened her eyes and again it was raining. The tears ran down her cheeks. The rain drummed on the roof and she knew she was insane. She screamed until she could scream no more. She cried until she could cry no more until, at last, she slept.

She awoke with a start and realized she had been dreaming. It seemed the sins of her past nineteen years had caught up with her tonight and a voice inside her was urging her to repent.

She writhed in the covers and asked herself why. Because she had dared to love? She could never forget him -- he had been her life. He was all she had lived for and now she was dead.

Dead. She was forever crying but the dead have no tears.

Outside it rained and the wind blew. The world grew dirtier and the children still cried.

He wasn't coming back. The ones you wanted never did.

Surviving

By JANELLE DANNE

cloud of screaming, crying people demanding freedom for the children. She blinked and they were gone.

And she was herself again. Nineteen and confused. There were so many roads to take and paths to follow. The future loomed before her like a dark cloud on the horizon.

He had left her and she had cried, and now the world was crying too. Great drops of tears that tried to wash away the hurt and they would, she knew. Someday the rain would stop and her

She tried to understand the madness of this earthly life and decided life and whoever was responsible for it was crazy. But then she was a little crazy too.

The fact that she was crazy left her undaunted. Being a little insane only added colour to her life and she enjoyed it.

She laughed out loud. Here she was, nineteen and already she had declared herself crazy. But then he had called her crazy too. She liked it when he called her crazy -- he said it with affection and she craved affection. She craved it now



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