

The Rabbit Story: An Imaginary Tale Part II

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When the stranger came down the path the rabbit instinctively turned and ran. She hid in the bushes, heart pounding, watching and waiting.

“Why didn’t the lady run?” She thought.

She had seen the stranger before. He walked these woods often. The rabbit could see that he was kind and gentle, but still she feared him. This fear was of a different kind, not well known to the rabbit. It was not like the fear of the owl or the wolf; she did not fear for her life. She knew she did not need to run fast or far, or to escape down into her burrow. The rabbit knew the difference between real danger and the need to be cautious. But still, something was different about the stranger that set a panic in the rabbit. So she ran and hid when she saw him in the woods.



There was a day not long before when the stranger came across the rabbit’s path and the rabbit froze, not making a sound or a movement. The stranger froze as well. Their eyes met and they stood motionless and silent for minutes. During this time, the rabbit watched the stranger closely. Her heart pounding, but remaining ever motionless, the rabbit stared deep into the stranger’s eyes. As the rabbit thought back on this encounter, she suddenly understood her fear of the stranger. That day, when she gazed into the stranger’s eyes, she started to trust! The stranger drew her in and she started to let go of fear.

“A rabbit cannot let go of fear!” she thought. “Fear is what saves me from my enemies. Fear is what protects me and keeps me safe in these woods.” “Fear has been with me since I was a young rabbit and keeps me wary, alive, safe.”

The rabbit now thought the stranger more dangerous than the even the wolf, or the silent flight of the snowy owl who swoops out of the sky to capture and kill unsuspecting rabbits. It was obvious to the rabbit the these were her enemies and meant her harm. The path before her was clear and she knew what to do to protect herself.

But the stranger had a way about him that caused the rabbit to let down her defenses.

“How can a rabbit protect herself from a danger she does not fully fear,” she pondered. It was new to her, and the strangeness was in itself something to be wary of and fear. At times it is difficult being a rabbit in a world so complex and dangerous.

“The lady causes me to trust as well,” thought the rabbit, “but somehow I don’t fear letting go to her.” “I know the lady is kind and gentle, and would not cause me any harm.” Letting go to the lady did not seem risky to the rabbit.

The lady! Suddenly the rabbit thought back to the lady! “She did not run and hide,” she thought. “Is she in danger?”

The rabbit watched from her safe haven in the bushes. The stranger walked by, a slight smile on his face. The lady barely seemed to notice him, but the rabbit could see that the stranger noticed the lady. It was slight and ever so subtle, but the rabbit noticed the quickening step, a change in pace, the quick glance. The stranger gave himself away by what he didn’t say or do, more than by any direct words or deeds. Without saying a word or showing any obvious outward sign, the stranger signaled his interest in the lady. The rabbit was sure. Rabbits were trained to notice everything.

“But did the lady notice?” thought the rabbit. “How could one not see?”

The rabbit watched the lady’s response. It too was subtle, but the rabbit could see that while she looked down into her book, pretending to read, she too was showing signs of interest. The lady’s eyes betrayed her ever so slightly. On her face was a slight smile, a tenseness of the muscles, a pretense of not noticing while all the while there was awareness of his presence, his footsteps, and his leaving.

“The lady noticed, but did not run!” How strange, thought the rabbit.

“Be careful, lady. There is a danger in trusting. It is not wise to let go so easily.”

As the stranger continued down the path, the rabbit sensed the danger had passed. She thought about returning to visit the lady, but thought better of it. The moment had changed and she felt a need to move on. She felt herself turning to practical things. The day was late and much still needed to be done. She was hungry, and it was time to eat. Her burrow needed tending, and she was always in search of water to refresh herself.

She was no longer in between. She would find a way to visit the lady again and perhaps warn her of the danger. For now the rabbit put on her best defenses and braved the woods, ever careful, ever vigilant.

And the lady continued to read her book. A hint of a smile was on her face, still somewhere in between.