

Little\_Skittles

# Not All Blossom Spark

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*Tell me how he died. Tell me his story. Tell me. Will he be remembered?*

*Cynthia—*


The lamppost awoke. It was late evening. The buzz near his face—his lantern, if one wanted to be technical—was steady now, a faint, electric hum. The bugs had returned, drawn to his light like moths to... well, a flame. He despised the moths. He despised their endless persistence. He dimmed its light just enough for the moths to seek out other light sources.

The lamppost sighed, the creak of his metal joints clinking softly as he raised his sleek, metallic arms. The street below was quiet, save for the distant purr of a cat passing through the shadowed avenue. His thoughts wandered, as they often did in the stillness of the night.

He couldn't leave. He wanted to leave. Not that he could. He lacked legs—metal legs, the kind his creator never thought to give him. Who would? It wasn't as if he were one of many *sentient* lampposts dotting the streets.

He cast his gaze down the narrow street, staring at them—his kind. Silent. Unthinking. Unaware. Their lights flickered faintly in the moonlight, a dull mimicry of life. He looked down upon them. He was unique. They weren't like him. They couldn't be.

For years, he had waited. For decades, he had stood among them, flourishing in their company yet forever alone. Not one thought like him. Not one acted like him. His voice, his questions, his desires—all unheard, unshared.



The lamppost's thoughts were interrupted by a sound—a soft, strange hiss that didn't belong. His gaze shifted, as though drawn by an invisible thread. Up in the sky, he saw...

*Plop*


A white rounded ball landed beside him, its huge girth was at least half as tall as him. Its skin was smooth and unblemished, pale, almost translucent white. Rounded on some parts but a gentle curve suggested it was perfectly oval. Its surface shimmered faintly in the moonlight, reflecting a flicker.

The lamppost recoiled, shielding its face from the annoyance. He was hesitant. Afraid. Confused. *'Was it broken?'*, He thought.

There was a slight crack, it marred the ball's surface, barely noticeable. It was broken. The lamppost assumed it was broken. Assuming the crack was a hint at anything, the lamppost knew that whatever this *ball* was, it would soon be devoid of any birth. Just like them—his kind.

His gaze was meticulous, shining a soft halo over the pale surface. A flicker. A movement. The egg shifted slightly. Cracks on the surface slowly deepened, faint and deliberate, expanding outward like spiderwebs. He'd tried to nudge it away, but the sound of faint tapping reached his lantern, irregular and *alive*. For the first time in his sentient life, he felt truly unprepared. Cursing his joints as they lock him in place, refusing to obey his instructions.

The tapping grew louder. A bit rhythmic now. Pulsing against the fragile shell. His light would flickered back and forth to his surroundings and back again to the ball. The urge to dim its light pound wildly inside him.



Then, with a sudden snap, a fragment of the ball's—no, egg's surface gave way. Its piece lay beside it, no larger than a leaf. Inside was a shallow hollow within. For a moment, there was nothing. And then, slowly, something shifted. A hand, pale and delicate, emerged, fingers unfurling like petals of a flower reaching full bloom.

'A hand?'


Many questions began to circulate inside his mind as piece by piece the egg fractured. Each break would thud and reverberate inside his lantern.

The hand pressed against the jagged edges of the shell. It pushed aside fragments of the egg. Its pale fingers would curl and unfurl as cracks widened, scattering fragments in its wake.

And then...

More of it emerged. An arm, slender and smooth, bearing the same resemblance as the egg. The lamppost hurriedly dimmed its light, afraid that whatever is in that egg was of no ordinary birth. It was something—a creature he had not seen before.

Then, another arm emerged. Two arms bearing the same resemblance as each other. It began to stir, pushing against the confines of the egg. Spreading the narrow cracks wider.



And then came a sound, audible enough for the lamppost to wince. Soft. Wet. Fragile. The rest of its form began to emerge. A quiet breath came out of the figure.


The creature, now released from its confines, slowly emerged out of the egg, crowned by strands of faintly glowing blonde hair. To the lamppost, the creature appeared to have thick golden fur on its head, long enough that it cascaded down toward the stone path.

It was small. Fragile. Naked. Its bare feet brushing against the cool stone. And out of the corner of the lamppost's eyes—if they did exist—watched as the creature took its first step. It stumbled slightly. He watched.

It walked a bit more before stumbling down. He watched as the air around it seemed to shimmer. No, he looked again. The faint glow of its hair pulsing in time with its breath. He watched The creature stood back up. It eyed its surroundings. Then slowly return back to its shell. Unmoving and unperturbed.

The lamppost observed in silence. Its dimming light burned just a bit brighter. Just enough for him to take a small peek. Its face. Tears in the creature's eyes. The lamppost wanted to speak, to offer... something, anything—but no words came. Instead, he was rooted in place, its metal pole shivered faintly. The creature's return to its broken shell puzzled him. *Shouldn't that thing be flying? It looked too furry—too golden—to be a little chick and certainly too unique to be anything the lamppost had ever known.*

The creature brushed its head against the shell. Soft golden strands of hair caught the tears as it streaked out of its eyes. Too soft. Too innocent. He glanced at its fur and imagined what would happen if he'd just reach out and touch them.



His cold metal fingers, oddly detailed with enough joints to replicate human hands, brushed against the creature's fur. The creature shivered and turned toward his lantern, shielding its eyes with its small, fleshy hands. Its hand looked delicate, slender and fairly translucent. When the lamppost dimmed its light further, the creature lowered its hands hesitantly, like petals trembling in a gentle breeze.

Noticing that he was being uncouth, he stopped, letting go of the fur as it gently glided down. The creature blink, its small, glistening eyes peering up at him. Caution and Curiosity. it shifted slightly, tilting its head as the fur protruding out of its hair glowed faintly. Then, hundreds of tiny little orbs came to life, shedding dark with its light.


The lamppost stood there. His vision swam and blurred. For a moment, he wondered if his light had failed him, for the world had seemed so bright.

“What are you?”

The lamppost finally managed to whisper, his voice crackling like static caught between fading signals.

The creature didn't respond. It only raised one delicate hand, as though reaching for him—or perhaps for the orbs, which now swirled lazily around them both, illuminating the stone path with a golden glow.

The creature tilted its head again, blinking slowly, almost as if the lamppost's question had taken root somewhere within. Then, for the first time, it opened its mouth.



And nothing came out but a single note—a sound too soft, too strange to describe, yet powerful enough to ripple through the orbs. They scattered upward, vanishing into the night like stars fleeing dawn. The creature closed its mouth and looked at him, a silent expectation in its shimmering eyes

The lamppost hesitated, its light flickering slightly, uncertain how to respond. The orbs were gone now, leaving only the faint glow of the creature's fur to light up the empty space. He sighed. He watched as the night sky began to cascade its moonlight glee behind the rolling buildings and down the duo. The creature gazed upwards. It yelped, mesmerized by the view.


The lamppost's flickering light steadied as he observed the creature's reaction. It yelped again, softer this time, its slender hands reaching toward the streaks of silvery clouds that drifted across the star-speckled sky. For a moment, it seemed to forget the lamppost entirely, captivated by the cool glow of the crescent moon spilling over the rooftops.

"What are you doing?"

His voice was sharp. The creature froze mid-reach. Its small, translucent hand lingered in the air as if grasping for something only it could see. The lamppost wondered what it could be. Slowly, it turned its head toward the lamppost, tilting its head as glowing eyes stood wide and uncomprehending.

The lamppost sighed. His metal body bent like a noodle as he casted a soft glow above the creature's head. And pointed to his body.

"Come here, don't go too far. There, there."



The creature hesitated but took a tentative step closer. Tilting its head, strands of golden fur catching the lamppost's soft glow. And blinked up at him, waiting for some kind of unspoken instruction.

The lamppost straightened his metallic frame, creaking softly. Then, a cluster of moths returned, buzzing aimlessly around his lantern. His metal body bended downright, hands clutching his head as the faint hum of their wings filled the silence, grating against his patience—against his lantern. He dimmed his light briefly, causing the moths to buzz in confusion, then brought it back, brighter this time, drawing them closer. He sighed in defeat.

For years, they annoyed him. For centuries, they buzzed, and grated, and grinded against his lantern. They were pests. Lifeless. Unaware. Inbred. Mindless. Invasive.

Endless.

Vexing.

Unrelenting.

Obtrusive.

"See these pests?"





He muttered, his voice was low, almost mechanical.

"They're useless. All they do is flutter and buzz. Always in my way. Watch."


Before the girl could react, a sharp *snap* echoed as the lamppost discharged a small spark, singeing one of the moths. A plume of smoke came out from the charred insect as it fell, its fragile body landing in the dirt. Unperturbed, the months bang against his glass lantern.

The creature flinched, its glowing eyes widening in alarm. It crouched down, peering at the tiny, lifeless form. Curious. Unease. Slowly, it reached out, its fleshy fingers brushed against the moth's scorched wings. She mouthed at him, no words came out, but he understood, *Why... Did you do that?*

The lamppost huffed, his light flickering irritably.

"Because it was bothering me. Always buzzing, always *there*. I deal with them so they don't bother me anymore."

The creature looked up at him, his lantern's expression unreadable. The creature held up the moth's fragile body, nudging it as though studying its broken form. She pointed and mouthed, *It... is small. Small cannot hurt you. Why... zap?*



The lamppost sighed. He looked down at the creature cradling the moth in its chest. Its fur emitted a soft golden glow. He looked back and forth towards the creature and the moth. Then, they saw the creature. *Light—*

The lamppost froze, his light dimming in confusion as the moths, once his unwelcome companions, now flocked around the creature like stars drawn to an unfamiliar moon. He watched as the small figure, its golden fur glowing faintly, reached up in delight, and tiny fleshy hands catching the air, as if dancing with the creatures he had come to despise.


The soft hum of their wings filled the night, but it was no longer an irritation. It was... harmonious, almost peaceful. The ceaseless clattering in his lantern, the crawling sensation that had clung to his metal body, vanished, leaving him weightless, untouched. For the first time, he felt free, he felt...

*Liberated—*

This creature, who had emerged from the broken shell. It was so fragile. Innocent. And yet capable of something he could not understand. *It's different*, he thought. Compared to his kind, this creature was alive. Capable of thought. Of speech. It was alive in a way he had never felt before, something beyond mere function.

He did not understand. Himself. The creature. Something about it stirred his unbridled curiosity.

The creature blinked up at him as it danced among the moths. It looked at him, a soft smile playing at the corners of its mouth, and for a moment, he could not help but wonder what a beautiful smile it was.

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Human. That was the race of the creature. That was what he learned after he took her under his care.

When he found her, she was naked, exposed to the elements that didn't sit right with him when he learned that humans wear clothes. Cotton, linen, wool, silk.


*Fabrics.*

But none could be found, the concept of clothes were foreign to this place.

He studied her quietly as she slept, curled up in the corner beside him. The light from his lantern cast soft shadows across her face, highlighting the innocence in her features, the way her chest rose and fell in rhythm.

Beneath her arms, a book rested—a children's novel. The book was worn, its edges frayed from countless readings. The words inside seemed simple, but to him, they were foreign, full of strange ideas he couldn't quite grasp. Friendship. Child-like-fantasies. The concept danced in his thoughts, something warm and distant, like the light of the stars that never quite touched the earth. How could a creature like him, made of metal and gears, ever understand something so... human?

His gaze drifted back to the girl. She was so small, so fragile, her body curled protectively as she tried to shield herself from the cold. Yet, in her sleep, she seemed so peaceful, unaware of the dangers of the world around her.



The wind outside howled, but it no longer mattered. She was safe now. *He had made sure of that.*

But as the days passed, his thoughts grew heavier. Her presence stirred something inside him, a strange longing to protect, to understand. But there were gaps in his knowledge, things about her, about humans, that he couldn't fill.

He reached out and gently touched the edge of the book, his cold metal fingers brushing against the soft, worn cover. What did it mean to *live*? To be human? To experience the world as she did? He had never questioned his own existence before, but now... now there was a space inside him that yearned for answers.


And yet, despite his mechanical mind, he couldn't help but feel something more than just duty. Something beyond what his circuits had been programmed for.

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"My name?"

He froze, his mechanical circuits whirled. The girl's gaze lingered on him, silently expecting something more than an answer.

He didn't have a name. Not like he could. He didn't even need one. The idea of having a name—an identity—was something beyond metal. It was foreign. He was made of metal,



while she was made of flesh. But the way she looked at him made him question everything he had known.

"I... do not have one."

The girl tilted her head. Her brow furrowing as if trying to piece together a thought. Then, she pointed at his body and then her hair. *Me... name you. In return... name me.*

For a moment, he considered the weight of her words. Names were more than just labels. They were an identity. Could he have such a thing?


His circuits buzzed with uncertainty, but he couldn't shake the thought off.

"Then... call me what you will."

He said, his voice slow, unsure. He didn't know what it meant, but he wanted to understand. To sate his own curiosity.

The girl's eyes brightened, her hair glowed in golden hue as she nodded. It took him a while to understand, but a few gestures and mimicking proved to be effective.

*Special. Light. Guide. Lantern. Your name... Lantern.*



*Lantern.* He mused, the word swirling in his thoughts. It felt... right, somehow. It was the closest thing he had to an identity, to something more than mere metal, closer to a human.

Then, the girl looked at him with wide, curious eyes. Waiting for the next step. He studied her carefully. The quiet moments stretching between them. She pointed to herself then, her hand resting over her chest. Her lips moved slowly, repeating the motion again and again.

*My... name...*


He paused, his circuits whirring as he tried to make think of a good name for her. A human name. What is a good name for a human? Good enough for her. For she was more than a creature of flesh—she was a mystery, an egg, an enigma that spawned suddenly in his life. The lamppost looked above.

"Cynthia."

He repeated it in his mind. It felt... right. A name associated with the moon.

Her face lit up. She touched her chest again, then pointed at him, confirming their bond.

*Cynthia.*



He nodded slowly, the word settling in his thoughts. Cynthia. It had meaning. It held weight. A name that would forever connect them, even if he didn't yet fully understand what that meant.

"Nhmmm, Cynthia."

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Time grew ever more slightly to the future, one where the air grew thick and heavy, the sky darkened to a turbulent gray as lightning crackled deep within the clouds. Cynthia walked slowly, her hands wrapped tightly around her naked body, her legs furred into a ball.

Her gaze flickered upward as the wind began to pick up, and the first heavy drops of rain fell against the backdrop of her thoughts. It soaked her thoroughly.

Then, she glanced up, a metal lamppost loomed above her, its light flickered weakly in the growing storm. It was Lantern. Her guide. Her friend—metal friend. His steady glow couldn't provide much protection against the rain, but it was all she had.

The wind pushed and raged on, creeping under her skin. Shivering, she tightened around her arms slightly. A ton of debris and trash were being lifted up into the air. Her eyes darted to the ones that looked nifty. There—

Without hesitation, the girl reached out and grabbed something in the air. As she reached out, Lantern lay hold of her, and steadily laid her to the ground. On her hands were branches and large leaves. The Lamppost eyed her as she began to work quickly, lifting the branches and laying them against the ground. It was a makeshift roof. Her hands



trembled with the cold as she surveyed her work. A smirk formed underneath her face, but the wind howled with rage once more, snapping the branches under its strength. The branches scattered across the pavement and up into the air. The wind stole her roof!

She glanced up at the lamppost, its light flickered steadily, as though laughing at her plight. And in a moment of desperation, she mimicked the shape of the roof with her hands, then widened her mouth in an 'O' shape as if trying to say, *Please?* He flickered his face twice in agreement and extended his metal arms out, plunking the leaves out of the air. He bent his metal frame around her as he tucked the giant leaves around his metal frame, forming a leafy cocoon.

Shelter!

The light flickered brighter inside the cocoon, and the girl could feel a soft, comforting warmth emanating from the lamppost, cocooning her in a bubble of warmth and light. A Pun! Badum tss!



She mused and smiled.

Warm.

Her tired shoulders relaxing for the first time since the storm began. Her fingers brushed against and hugged his face. It was a Lantern for a face! But it fitted him. She gazed at his face and released a soft smile. *Thank you.*

The storm knocked outside their little bubble, but she was warm.




Cynthia sat quietly beneath the lamppost, her fingers wrapped tightly around the small bundle of leaves she carried. The storm had passed, but the sky remained a heavy shade of gray. The world around her felt still.

Flickering gently above her was Lantern's steady light, casting a soft halo around Cynthia. She peeked out their little leafy cocoon. The rain was gone. her gaze lingered at her only source of warmth and security. When was it that she first considered her as her friend? It had been so long. It had always been there, offering its light, its presence. *The rain has stopped.*

The lamppost shifted slightly, removing the giant leaves off his body. Its light dimmed as his metal arms puckered outwards. His face flickered, and then—slowly—it began to hum softly. Cynthia tilted her head. She had never heard this sound before. It was gentle, like a whisper in the wind.

Cynthia bobbed her head to the sound. She swayed her arms forward, and then sideways. His arms began to synchronize with his feet. Her body spun in a circle, her feet tapping lightly against the pavement in time with the rhythm. A quick twirl followed. Her laughter spilling out as her movements became more fluid.

Lantern saw this and whistled a tune; there was a hint of mechanical clicks in the air. The tune was slow at first, then, it gradually sped up. Her movements followed. Together, it was a perfect harmony, a duo in sync. And, in a single beat, both their paths began to meet. A symphony, an orchestra of each and every step Cynthia made.



From within the lamppost, something began to emerge. At first, it was barely visible—just a faint outline of light. Then, it took shape. A delicate lantern, its light soft and warm, floated gently into the girl's hands. Cynthia blinked, her fingers reaching out instinctively to grasp it. It was small, no larger than the palm of her hand, but its glow was steady and comforting. Looking closer, it looked like a miniature version of his face.


As Cynthia stared the lantern at her hand, her brow furrowed in confusion. She didn't know what it meant, but something in Lantern's steady light told her everything she needed to know. It was important. She cradled the lantern closer, letting its warmth seep into her cold fingers.

When the last note flitted to the air, a pulse of energy traveled through the lantern's handle. It wasn't loud or forceful, just a soft vibration. Cynthia's eyes widened, her eyebrows shot up. Lantern stood beside her.

She raised the lantern toward her chest, looking up at the lamppost with wide eyes. She mimicked the action, holding the lantern out toward it, and then placed her hands together, *Thanks*. The light from Lantern brightened for a brief moment.

"Don't worry, I'm always with you."

She knew, without needing words, that this small lantern was now her constant companion. A light that would follow her wherever she went, offering guidance, hope, and warmth when the world felt cold and dark. It wasn't just an object—it was a part of Lantern. The girl tucked the lantern, holding it as close as if it were a part of her own heart.



And in that moment, no matter where she went, the lamppost's light would be with her, guiding her.

And the girl, silent as always, smiled.

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The moon hung low in the sky, casting long shadows of buildings across the pavement. The girl, Cynthia, stood by the lamppost, as she always did, looking up at him. Her small hands fidgeted, as if waiting for something to happen. She had no words to speak, but the look in her eyes was clear. *Play with me.*


The lamppost nodded. The faint hum of its light buzzed, almost like a chuckle. Cynthia smiled, her eyes lit up with anticipation. It had been a while since they played their favorite game, and she was eager to start.

Lantern turned around slowly, his back to the girl.

"One... two... three... four..."

The girl knew the game well. It was always the same, a simple game of hide and seek. But to her it was more than just a game, it was a game just between the both of them.

"Five... six... seven..."



When Lantern reached ten, he spun around. His lantern face beamed a soft golden beam of light, searching for any sign of her. But of course, it was never that simple. The lamppost didn't move; it didn't need to. The challenge was in the way that Lantern had to seek—not with his eyes, but with his heart, with his senses, with the very light that connected them. It was weird. Foreign to him. But it is what they both had. A connection to the light!


She looked down, her hands caressed the grainy wood. There were holes, a lot of them. She hid inside a huge, hollowed out trunk. She peeked out from one of the holes. Then a golden beam of light entered her pupil. She backed away the wall, eyeing the light as it continued to beam out, then, hundreds more sprouted out from the holes. *Beautiful.*

She reached out with one hand and touched the warm light. A small smile tugged at her lips. It was always the same, in a way—her mind could find it, even if her eyes could not. The light was always there, always guiding her, always finding her, always *present*.

And then, in a swift motion, she reached up and touched the lamppost's glowing surface. Her fingers traced the warm metal, the familiar shape of it. The game was over—she had been found, as she always did. The thrill of it—the joy in knowing she could always find the light, even in the darkest moments—that was what made the game special.

She clapped her hands together, a quiet celebration, her joy radiating through her. *Victory for Lantern!*

She crouched down, fingers brushing the earth, looking for somewhere new to hide. The lamppost remained still, but the glow was ever-present, always watching. And so, with the same quiet joy, the Lamppost closed his eyes once more and began to count again.



The game would continue, as it always had. No words were needed, it was a game where Lantern never failed to find where Cynthia was hidden. And she loved it.

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The ground trembled beneath their feet. An Earthquake. Cynthia held the lantern close to her chest, the faint glow flickering like a heartbeat, while the lamppost's light shone steady, just right above her. A deep rumble echoed through the earth, followed by a sharp crack. The world around them shook violently, sending dirt and dust flying into the air. The lamppost's light flickered, its steady hum faltering for the first time.

Her hands gripped the lantern tighter. She raised one hand slowly. She could feel the trembling earth with a mere touch. But the tremors were relentless, and the lamppost's light began to falter, dimming and flickering as if something were pulling at it from within.

With wide eyes, she looked up, watching the lamppost's glow sputter, dimming light. It had been with her for so long, guiding her, always a constant source of warmth and security. But now, in the face of the earth's violent shaking, the lamppost has begun to weaken. The girl's hands trembled as she held the lantern, tightening it every-so-slightly.

The sound of cracking metal filled the air. The lamppost groaned in protest, flickering on and off, as the base began to shift, the ground splitting beneath it. The girl's eyes widened in realization. *No*. She backed away, but the lamppost's light continued to flicker weakly, struggling to stay alive in the storm of destruction. Her heart raced, her hands trembling.

*No. No, this couldn't be happening.*



She reached out with her free hand, trying to touch Lantern one last time. But it was already too late. With a final, desperate flicker, the lamppost's light sputtered and died. The ground beneath them shook once more, and a loud crash filled the air. The lamppost fell, its once-sturdy frame crumpling under the weight of nature.

Cynthia sank to her knees, her heart breaking. She held the lantern tightly, *as if it could somehow bring the lamppost back to life*. Closing her eyes, fingers trembling against the cool metal. The soft light of the lantern flickered faintly in the growing darkness, but it wasn't enough. It wasn't the same.


Tears slipped down her cheeks. Her body shook, but there were no words. She wished words would come out of them.

The lamppost was gone, and the warmth it provided had vanished with it. She looked around, searching for anything that could bring her comfort, but everything was still. The earth had stilled. The only sound was the faint hum of the lantern.

And then, from deep within her heart, a memory stirred. A quiet whisper, a voice that had never been spoken but understood. The game. The game they always played.

Her fingers gently touched the lantern, and her hands raised it high. She closed her eyes once more, turning her body toward the ruins of the fallen lamppost. She held the lantern out in front of her, eyes closed in silent prayer.

*Turn around, close your eyes, count to ten. You never fail to find me where I was hidden.*



The words echoed softly in her mind. The lamppost's light may have dimmed, but she remembered. She remembered the game, the bond they shared. And though it had been shattered in an instant, the memory remained.

Cynthia stood slowly, her hands still holding the lantern. Her fingers brushed her cheeks, wiping away the tears, as she took one final glance at the lamppost.

With a deep, steady breath, she turned around. Her hands raised as she began to count, her voice silent but strong in the depths of her heart. Ten... nine... eight... The earth was still. The lamppost was gone. But the light remained, flickering softly in her chest, guiding her forward.

And though the lamppost had fallen, she would always carry its light with her—forever finding her way, no matter how dark the path may seem.