

ELIZABETH'S ADMIRER

Raph saw her for the first time at the grocery store where she worked on his way home from a meeting. Her long, thick brown hair framed her face, just a couple strands tickling her cheeks. Her green eyes shone with her story behind them, and he wanted to know that story.

"Sir?" she said, calling him back into reality. "Sir? Your total is \$43.28." She held out a slender hand with perfectly manicured nails; Raph wanted to feel her skin on his skin, a quick and soft embrace of the palms. She looked so warm and gentle that he lost all words and actions.

Raph shook his head hard. "What? Oh, sorry about that," he chuckled. Pulling out his wallet, he handed her a \$50 bill. As he put it in her hand, he looked upwards a couple inches at her chest; her name was Elizabeth. What a beautiful name.

Elizabeth marked the bill with a note checker, jammed it underneath her register, and speedily counted out his change. Putting the coins first into his still outstretched hands, she said, "Your change is \$6.72. Have a great day!"

Raph clasped his hand around the money. He would never spend this money. He shifted to the side just the slightest bit, still blocking the next customer.

"Sir?"

Raph's throat was suddenly very dry. "Uh," he choked. "Elizabeth. I-I was wondering, if you might be interested, if you'd like to, to have a coffee with me