Grey Kingdom

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# **Prologue**

Little John was smiling widely. His smile was spreading like the crescent moon. It’s not every day his father returns home. John’s mom was preparing the home for his husband to relax. He gets vacation very rarely. But he makes his family proud by his loyal work, being the lieutenant of royal army.

Marcus sent letter a week ago. He’s receiving a vacation for a whole week. Nadia had tears in her eyes. Generally he gets leave for two or three days. Promotion didn’t make Marcus’ life lavisher, rather it gave him honor and more and more duties.

Nadia was about to leave and greet his husband who will come from a faraway land. She instructed Marcus to play outside.

*“Don’t go too far, dear. I’ll be right back.”*

*“Yes, mommy.”*

The sun was in a light mood, a sweet afternoon. Birds were chirping in the spring breeze.

John liked to play in the large garden of their house.

Marcus’ sacrifice by staying away from family is paid by the kingdom with honor and wealth. They are one of the most respected family in the whole town and also one of the richest. The colossal house that John played around was its testimony.

But today John was not interested to play inside the house. He roamed the garden. There were vibrant flowers all around. The gardener was out on a leave. So he was alone. John playfully traversed around the edge of garden and forgot Nadia’s advice.

There were butterflies in the garden. But one of them caught John’s childhood eyes. A grey yet striped design butterfly was just about to sit on a flower to collect its nectar. But the poor insect didn’t have enough time. Two curious eyes were following it. Natural instinct made it fly away and this made the curious child follow it.

Radiance, the capital of Kingdom was quiet at this hour. John encountered no stranger as he unknowingly trespassed to an abandoned garden from his vibrant one. He lost track of the butterfly that he was following. Now he found himself in front of a large stone cottage. It was worn out in years of neglect. Algae bloomed all over the stone roof. John was a child, curiosity made him forget that he was lost.

The door to the cottage was open with mosses covering its entrance. John went inside. It was a wide room with a very few furniture. There was a medium white reading table made up of ivory, a chair with complement to it and there was a stone sealed door at the end with no key mechanism but an empty round socket.

As John was about to approach the door, a black figure approached him from behind. A shiny black armored knight with a monstrous helmet in his head. However his face was open and it was his father’s face. But this man acted nothing like his father. His father had a shiny white armor with a noticeable grey crest.

The man shouted in a hideous tone,

*“Who dare come here?”*

John looked behind and was extremely terrified at the angry face. His primal instincts warned him of inevitable danger.

*“Fath…?”*

John couldn’t finish. The black figure rushed at him with an open sword in a blind rage.

*“Trespasser!”*

The monstrous shout made John crumble in fit.

*About two days later,*

These two days had been hell for Nadia. Her husband didn’t come two days ago. A royal servant brought a letter from Marcus where he apologized for delaying the coming due to an emergency mission. John, her son, was found near the garden in a trance of severe fever. He was speaking gibberish about a monstrous man in his trance. It was all up to Nadia to take care of her child in this terrible state.