

The Golem & The Empath

AMY PLOUGH

IT STARTED OUT SO SWEET. IT SEEMED SO GENUINE TO HER. A simple man, ready to take her to the ends of the Earth and back. A man whose love appeared so deep that it could be the net that caught them both. The flawless façade he kept, the charisma and charm, like the short-lived, shade loving Azalea. She was quickly drawn in by his exotic charm, and drank the mad honey, trusting in its safety, as his act and outward appearance suggested to her. Just as quickly, once ensnared, the honey turned to poison, that would kill her over the years.

Her premonition, her empathetic powers warned her, but his charm and craft were too great. She resisted, if only briefly, to weep, and cry tears of sorrow, longing, loneliness and despair, for her renewed inward cries manifested loud and clear. Only two weeks after the ceremony, he demonstrated her helplessness, flying to other women, and returning, spitting sorries, and blame. She realized too late, how seemingly permanent the cage she had crawled into. Once crafted, his eager mouth set open wide, in front of her parent's doors, that she so willingly fled. Her parents, who should have cared so much more, and protected her from the soul sucking predators, pushed her toward the gateway to the hungry world, where he patiently waited at the threshold, picking her, not as an easy target, but as a delicious one. He saw in her, her ability to feel, without stealing, other's emotions, energies, and histories. Hungerly, maw stretching wide, he waited for her, the meal that would last a lifetime.

It started out small, a constant quid pro quo, constant guilt, and a constant threat to her and those she shared such deep feelings, and care for, those who, like her, were vulnerable empaths. Her children are her greatest joy, and his greatest means for control, and alternate snacks, when he wanted variety, or when he became greedy, sick with hunger that would never be satisfied. He wove and spun the guilt, lies, and shame, creating false memories, and the belief that his constant theft of energy, financial, sexual, physical, and emotional well-being was deserved, and righteous punishment for an unknown sin.

He too was an easy target, due only to his willingness to allow greater predators a glimpse into this world. They heard his enthusiastic calls, sensed his want of

Dedicated to: RFB, the empath in my life, and the one who gave life to me, when others would so readily gnaw it away. My teacher, validator, and friend. May you forever find a way in this dark and hungry world. Be safe, always.

true emotions and redeemable soul. One by one demons and malicious, angry spirits granted his wish for a consensual possession. They took glee in the use of his hollowed-out body for a while, in return for his offerings, gifts, and sacrifices to them. Through them, he became a crafty wolf, testing boundaries, finding holes in defenses she began to build. Though he was neither smart nor strong, he ruled through a strong bark, the ever-present threat. The more she wanted to hate him, the less she could. It is not the way of an empath to hate, even the most deserving of villains. Drawing willingly offered strength from her younglings, and friends who borrowed, amplified, drew and channeled energy, and emotion into her, still yet, intelligent and strong body, allowed her mind to once again know and accept that she is magnificent. They helped her to find the strength within, to chip away the chains that bound her, and bravely take on the hollow, to deprive it of its meals, cause it to wither, and shrivel as its greed eats the shell which housed it so willingly.

In the final hours of the meal, cut abruptly short, he tossed his deceptive veil aside, no longer finding it beneficial to slurp greedily, and instead, in an act of desperation, crawled from his shell, bore down on her and tried to gulp what was left of his carefully chosen meal. He had grown fat and lazy, enjoying what he thought would be an endless meal, and she had built an impenetrable fortress, from past experience, memory, evidence, and support, secretly obtained.

Too late Golem, you lose. Your false kingdom crumbles, your meals fly away, and you are now too bloated to chase. It seems fitting that you now

lie close to the ground, unable to fly. Slither away, you greedy man, and live life starving, for you will not soon find such an abundant meal. Now wither, and crawl back into the hole from whence you came.

