

Remembering the Wedding Ring

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An Edward one shot where he's looking back at his life before he was turned. Edward's POV.

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Remembering the Wedding Ring

The year was 1918, Chicago Illinois. The influenza epidemic was at its peak. Most of the families in the city, including mine, were crowded, taking up any available space in all of the hospitals across town. I was seventeen when my family was taken in; our butler had taken us against our wishes. My mother had complained the whole way. If I had known what was to come I would have been complaining as well.

But I hadn't. Why? Because I was carefully watching my father. I had been right to worry; he was the first of my family to die. He died with my mother and myself at his bedside. We stayed at his side till his end finally came. His calm green eyes, identical to mine, never closed by his power again. It was the beginning of the chaos and the change.

The other doctors had little hope for us, any of us, and they didn't try to hide it. Even though we had more than enough money, so many people were dying that even with the best, it seemed like they felt they were fighting a battle they had already lost. If we had offered them a ridiculous amount of riches, it would have made no difference, they were already giving it their all. We would have just looked selfish and foolish if we had. So we were trying to survive like every one else, with some dignity.

But there was one, my mother called him Our doctor . He was very kind; he had placed my mother in the bed next to mine. Some thing he hadn't had to do. Dr. Cullen was his name, Carlisle Cullen. At first he had made me uneasy he seemed too surreal, too beautiful for a human man. I didn't know if it was the influenza, but his eyes never seemed to be the same in his darkened sockets; it was as if he had a great lack of sleep. They seemed to change from the truest gold, and gradually lost it's brightness to an onyx black as the days passed. His skin was also unnaturally, and death like, pale. I had heard that the hands of a doctor were cold, but were they supposed to be as hard as stone as well?

I had thought a lot about it, about his lack of human traits. His grace, his voice, and his ageless essence. But only at first. My mother and I had taken a turn for the worse. My skin was burning but I had felt as if I were submerged in ice. The room that I shared with so many people, and the bed I laid on, seemed to be in constant motion. And the pain in my head made my flat pillow feel as if it were made of knives and stone. But my pain hadn't lessened there. My mother was as bad, if not worse, than me and at my side when the doctors were not. True the doctors had said that my condition was worse, but even I, in my condition, knew that if my mother did not rest, she would die before I did.

Dr. Cullen would urge her to stay in her bunk when he would return. She would complain at first, stubbornly stating that she was fine. But when she was finally back, and resting, exhaustion and pain would over take her. She always seemed slightly at ease when Dr. Cullen was with us. Curious I had asked her why it was so, she had always show distaste toward doctors, and she told me,

Edward, darling, right now it's because he's taking care of you. It's because I can't, as much as I hate

to admit it. He's going out of his way to take care of us more than he should. I can't help but take a liking to that man, I like to think of that handsome gentleman as our guardian angel. Her voice had been weak and thick with rasp, I knew it hurt her to speak more than it had me, and it was the last time she spoke to me.

The last time I heard her speak was that night. She was screaming, demanding that Dr. Cullen do everything in his power to save me. I had watched her, later on as she lay there in the bunk next to mine, dieing. Her auburn hair standing out in the dark sullen room, I knew mine did too, my hair the same odd shade as hers. Only hers was wild, untamed at the moment, even though she lay there sleeping. It reminded me of a flame, and I hoped it wouldn't go out. An hour later she died in her sleep.

I could feel the same nagging feeling she probably had; I could sense that my time was not far now. But in my condition, hours seemed like days, so I was unsure how long I had. So there I lay, next to the bed where the corps of my mother was being taken away, the last heir to the Masen family fortune. I didn't care, we had never cared that we were wealthy, we didn't like to show it, and we didn't want to be the snobbish outcasts many with wealth were. I could hear one of the nurses that were talking to another both treating victims on the floor at the foot of my bunk.

That was Elizabeth Masen, poor gal, she was in hysterics not an hour ago. She sighed a sigh of pity.

I had hoped that meant she was going to recover, she had been so full of energy. I do hope her son pulls through. They were a nice family, always kept to themselves, not like other wealthy families, flinging money in every direction. It's sad that most people don't even know about them. She stood up and went to my bedside.

I will pray for you, Edward Masen. Don't give up. She brushed my hand, and then went to continue her work.

After that the noise in the room dulled out to the back of my head, the noises of the sick and dieing were not pleasant to hear, and I had heard more than enough. It didn't matter if she prayed I knew that Edward Masen was going to die, I was going to die. True like all of the others I didn't want to die, but I felt somewhat at peace, I was not afraid of death. My mother's last words played again and again in my head. In a way she had sacrificed herself for me, given her well being for the sake of mine. It was the reason why I still fought to stay alive.

I rested, I was sure, I was hoping that if I died that night, I would die in my sleep, in a pleasant dream. But I was awakened; it had been Dr. Cullen, he was taking me through the crowded halls of the hospital. We went through the morgue, I could see my mother's wedding ring in a dish next to where she lay on a metal slab. Dr. Cullen grabbed it and took it with us as we left through the hospital doors. Outside the cold hit me like a block of ice, it was night, and the stars were the last things I saw as I lost consciousness.

When I woke again I knew I was alive, that or I thought I had died and gone to hell. The pain had been a menace to my sanity. At first I had been relieved that the cold was leaving, I had thought I was cured, but then the warmth turned to an irritating heat, then it felt as if my body were caught aflame. I had not paid any attention to where I was, but I could see Dr. Cullen at my side. He was repeating apologies for something I didn't understand yet. But I couldn't hate him; I was in too much agony to do that.

The pain lasted for three days, not one of them did Carlisle leave my side. I felt different, strange, unbalanced, and yet I was keen on the things around me. There was a new sensation in the back of my throat; a thirst uncontrollable and not easily ignorable, I didn't understand the yearning I felt. My senses were heightened, I could hear, see, and taste things I knew were impossible for me to sense, if I were still human. I stared at the doctor for a long time trying to understand what it was he had done to me. That was when I heard it. His thoughts.

Will he leave? He asked himself.

I hope I made the right choice. How would his mother have known what it was she was asking of me? I should have given him the choice. Will he hate me for what I have done? I stared at him, and shook my head to his questions, so many questions, but I had so many more. I stared at him as he tried to think of a way to explain to me what it was he had done, I heard everything he thought, nothing verbal was ever needed.

It took a while for me to get used to being like this, I had come to terms with the fact that my heart would never beat again. The thirst had been the hardest to overcome, if I denied it, the monstrous thirst inside would take over, and I would have no control over the crimes I committed. To be truthful I still haven't overcome it. Carlisle took me in as a son and taught me his ways; at first it was hard to abide by his rules, feeding on animals, when the venom in my mouth screamed for human blood. I had to learn that that was the best way to live with myself, to keep the monster at bay.

So here I stand, telling my story, well over eighty years after this story began, still young, and still seventeen. Forever seventeen. How Edward Masen had died and became the son of a great doctor, a vampire yes, but a hero just the same. I am Edward Cullen of the Cullen family. The disgrace to the vampire species. We do not deny what we are. We do however fight it, and try hard to live normal lives disguised as humans. Living among them, fighting the thirst.

I still have my mother's ring, but not because I look forward to marriage in my endless future, but for the memory of what I once was, and will hopefully become again with time. Losing control at the sight of blood is something I do not want to have to worry about. I want to be like my father. Carlisle had overcome the thirst hundreds of years ago; he was an inspiration to all of us that were still struggling. I hoped it would not take me as long; hopefully the presence of Carlisle and the memory of his endurance will help. But no matter I will still hold onto that ring, the keepsake of my mother and her struggle to keep me in this world. A world I have seen change, and will continue to watch as the centuries pass. I will live, for her, if that is what you can call this heartless existence.

This is a tribute to the inspirational character of twilight, by Stephenie Meyer.

Art by Niji707 (artimes) at DeviantART.com

Edward Cullen will be forever in the hearts of readers around the world.