



SIEBENQUELL

The Man with Eyes of Ice



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Once upon a time, not long ago and certainly not far, far away, there lived a man named Charles. He had eyes of ice, and no warmth ever emanated from him, neither from his person or his words. His heart was a frozen cavern, from which only accusation and criticism ventured forth. For him every other human heart was nothing more than a bullseye for his endless invective. It was his most deeply held conviction that he alone saw the world clearly and correctly through those cold and colourless eyes. He scoured the world for failure and found it in every fold, nook and cranny. His pronouncements were grander than commandments. Unlike God, he would never settle for writing ten words on tablets of stone with his finger. His ambition was far greater. His words would be carved into human flesh, thus drawing blood with every utterance. For a man so singularly devoid of passion, it was his one indulgence.

Like all mortals, Charles died one day. When his eyes opened from the slumber of death, he swathe gates of heaven before him, wide open and bathed in cold, pale blue light. Before them stood a woman, obviously waiting for him. One pace behind her stood a man, smiling gently in his direction. In a few brief steps, Charles stood before them, his sharp gaze critically scrutinizing his surroundings.

»Who are you and where am I?«, he asked rather rudely. The woman graciously replied: »My name is Eve and this is my husband Adam. Welcome to the gateway to the fullness of life!«

»These are the gates of heaven?«, Charles said with incredulity. »Pretty shabby, if you ask me. I expected a little more colour and warmth of the place. It certainly does not live up to its billing!«

The woman jutted her jaw out and replied: »As in life, so in death. You do not see the world as it is, but as you are!«

Smugly, Charles retorted: »There is nothing wrong with my eyes. I am one of the very few people who sees things clearly. All my life, it was a point of pride for me. Others were delusional, ignorant or foolish. They could not break through to the truth of matter, were blind to the failures and faults all around them. I was always a man of moral rectitude.«

Now Adam spoke up. »You have eyes of ice. They made you into a man of moral indignation, not of moral rectitude. Your perpetual indignation was a cheap substitute for virtue. It left you with the illusion of being on the side of good, without ever having to do anything about the bad. You were left deeply satisfied by passing judgement over a world you did nothing to serve, fashion or form. You never touched a wound. You never permitted yourself to be touched by the pain of frailty and inadequacy. As one of my many descendant so aptly put it: «Moral indignation is jealousy with a halo.*«

Aghast at these words, Charles vigorously replied: »No, no, no! You are wrong. I saw things truly. I saw them clearly. Of course, I passed judgment. That was my contribution to the world. It was my responsibility! It was my calling!«

From within the gates, a warm, softly sighing voice whispered these words in Charles' ears. »No, Adam's son, it was always and only my responsibility. To fulfil it justly and properly, you would have needed my eyes.«

The warmth and tenderness of that voice blew around Charles like a spring breeze from the mountains and melted the ice in his eyes. The thaw flowed from those eyes and down his cheeks. However, not a single tear was allowed to fall to the ground. Each one fell on the tip of God's finger and was gently placed in his flask.

Charles was startled and stunned by the glorious, glowing colour of the place. And the warmth! That warmth! It brought tears to his eyes, and these tears too were tenderly caught and poured into God's flask.

Adam and Eve each took an arm and accompanied Charles through the gates. Adam said to him, »HE collects every tear that has ever been shed since he formed me from the earth.«

»And what does he do with the tears he collects?«, asked Charles.

»At the end of every day, he uses them as eye drops. At dawning of each new day, he uses the tears he has gathered in the darkest hours of the night and uses them as eye drops once more. It is how HE cares for his eyes so that he might see his world as he saw it on the sixth day.«

When Charles heard Adam's words, he knew he was home. He searched this new world for life and love and found it in every fold, nook and cranny.

Eve, on the other hand, only said, »You have beautiful eyes.«

*H.G. Wells

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