

A FAIRY TALE FOR ADULTS

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Tales of the Forgotten  
Fiction Network

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We hear the sound of a grasshopper, but it's making more noise than it should. We hear the thump, thump as it hops across the stage. We hear the sound of a microphone stand being adjusted and the thump as someone taps on the microphone.

DANIEL

Hello! I'm Daniel. What's your name?

(beat)

Ah. Well, it is wonderful to make your acquaintance. If you've got some time, I'd like tell you a story that happened not so long ago. Are you ready? Good. Let's begin.

SFX: Transition sound

DANIEL (V.O.)

Chapter 1. Meet The Crofts. "In my dream, the angel shrugged and said if we fail this time, it will be a failure of imagination. And then she placed the world gently in the palm of my hand." —Story People

(beat)

Once upon a time... No, wait. You're an adult. That's not catchy enough for you. One moment... It was a dark and stormy n- No, no. That won't do either. Just a second... Colin Croft wasn't the type of man you'd see behind bars. Neither was his wife, Nia. In fact, the Crofts were not the type of people anyone would ever accuse of wrongful parenting. Regardless, that's exactly what the charge was against them. It was a very serious charge, punishable by — well, let's not get ahead of ourselves. We'll start at the beginning...

COLIN

Allie! Ethan! Let's go!

ALLIE

We're coming dad!

We hear a pair pounding footsteps as Allie and Ethan run down a carpeted staircase.

COLIN  
What's all that stuff?

ETHAN  
Stuff for our experiments. Dowsing  
Rods and a few crystals and a  
electromagnetic-

COLIN  
What's a dowsing rod?

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Ethan pulled two pieces of wire coat  
hangers out of his backpack.

ETHAN  
It's used to measure the earth's  
energy field. I want to see how  
strong it is around the stones.

ALLIE  
The chambers are on ley lines too.

ETHAN  
Exactly. They probably have some  
untapped power.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Colin's amusement with the  
conversation deepened the laugh lines  
around his mouth. I daresay he was a  
handsome fellow, even the lines of  
gray decorating his black hair like  
the tinsel on a holly tree. And  
always one to keep to schedules, he  
ushered his children outside and  
locked the front door.

3 EXT. OUTSIDE CROFTS HOME

3

We hear the sound of the front door closing, and the jangle  
of keys as it's locked.

COLIN  
Powers huh?

ALLIE  
Don't say it like that dad. Don't you  
know about Quantum Physics?

COLIN

Is that what you're learning in school?

DANIEL

They walked over to an SUV where Nia Croft was standing, talking on her cell phone. She smiled at her children and mouthed: *I'll be right there*. Colin glanced at his wife and tapped his finger against his watch in an attempt to get her to hurry along then got in the driver's seat.

We hear SUV car doors opening and closing.

4 INT. SUV

4

ALLIE

No. They don't teach us about that type of stuff in school. We just memorize and regurgitate facts that we'll never use again in our life.

ETHAN

They should though. It's way more interesting.

COLIN

Hey regurgitate is a big word. Bet you learned it in school.

ALLIE

Totally missing the point, Dad.

COLIN

I know, I know. Well, look as long as your independent research doesn't interfere with your homework you keep doing what you're doing.

DANIEL

Allie pulled out cell phone and put in her headphones, the tell tale sign that a teenager had enough of parental wisdom. Ethan had long since stuck his nose into his copy of Yes! magazine. He was twelve, four years younger than his sister, and unlike Allie he had given up trying to convince his parents that their world view was incredibly limited.

(MORE)

DANIEL (cont'd)

Adults thought they knew everything – or at the very least more than their kids. Ethan was of the opinion that while that was true in some cases, something happened to adults that sucked out their imaginations. It was like the adult rite of passage to stop believing in the fantastical once they reached a certain age. Ethan was determined that neither he nor his sister would ever get like that when they grew up.

(beat)

Did you make that promise to yourself when you were a child? Did you keep it? Hmm...

We hear the sound of the passenger side door opening, as Nia gets into the car and closes the door after.

NIA

Ready. Let's go.

COLIN

I thought we said no work today?

NIA

It wasn't work.

(playful)

Hey, you two back there. Ready to have some fun?

ETHAN

Oh yeah. I got the dowsing rods!

NIA

(laughing)

Cool.

We hear the sound of a car moving over gravel, and the faint background hum of it as the Crofts head out of town.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Though he wanted to, Colin did not ask who Nia had been talking to on the phone. They were six months into their separation and he didn't feel like he had that right anymore. The family lapsed into a comfortable silence as they made the forty-five minute drive to the destination chosen by their children.

(MORE)

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)

In case you were not aware, scattered across New England, there are hundreds upon thousands of miles of ancient stone circles, walls, rows, and chambers. The Croft Family SUV finally stopped just a few yards back from two of these chambers. A stone wall ran alongside them to the east, right on the edge of the forest line. It was a pretty enough sight with the multi-colored leaves of fall <word> the trees and scattered over the ground, decorating the earth.

ETHAN

So cool!

DANIEL (V.O.)

The young lad had put his magazine away. Now, his nose pressed against the window. The moment Colin turned off the car, Allie and Ethan scrambled out and raced over to the chamber.

Let's hear this.

5 EXT. STONE CIRCLE - DAY

5

DANIEL (V.O.)

Colin and Nia (as adults do) were slower to get out of the car, taking the time to watch their children's excitement with affectionate amusement. Colin tucked his hands into his jean pockets and stole a glance over at his wife. She looked good, she always did, but more than that she looked... happy. She looked content. It was chilly and her dark skinned cheeks were rosy because of the wind. Her shoulder length hair was slightly curled, loose, and free flowing. Her dark brown eyes were lively, much more so than they'd been the last two years of their marriage. Or so he thought.

COLIN

So, what's his name?

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Her eyes shot over to him. He  
couldn't read what was behind her  
stare.

NIA  
(beat)  
We're not doing this today.

COLIN  
I'm not doing anything. I was just...  
asking.

NIA  
You're never just asking, Colin.

COLIN  
I promise I won't beat him up.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
I tell you, it was positively  
precious when he was rewarded with  
the slightest twitch of her lips, a  
telltale sign of her amusement. She  
gave a tiny shake of her head,  
looking away from him and back at  
their children.

NIA  
Jacob.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Colin's jealousy flared. Oh dear. It  
made his shoulders square, his  
nostrils flare, and his jaw set.  
Colin nodded curtly and because she  
was right, it really wouldn't be fair  
to the kids if they did this today,  
walked away from her. Nia sighed.  
They act like children sometimes;  
adults, especially when they're hurt.  
And like children, Colin made an  
assumption that wasn't true. But, Nia  
hadn't corrected him either and  
perhaps she should have. Who knows.  
Let's continue.

ETHAN  
Guys you gotta come see this!

DANIEL (V.O.)

Nia caught up with Colin and let him lead the way to the stone chamber. The doorway was typical, about 3'3 feet wide but short, only 5'4 feet high. Nia and Colin had to duck passing through it. They were able to straighten to their full height when they got into the chamber but the ceiling was still low, so much that there was maybe an inch between it and Colin's head. There was nothing remarkable about the inside of the chamber. Except that it was a lot cleaner than either Nia or Colin expected but that was a passing thought. Sunlight streamed in through the one window, spreading the light perfectly. The stone walls were smooth, the floor sprinkled only with the occasional leaf that blew in through the window. Ethan had out the dowsing rods. He held them crossed lightly over top of one another and was walking slowly around the perimeter of the chamber. Allie had out her video camera and was panning around in a circle.

ETHAN

How cool is this place?

NIA

Very cool. Getting any readings?

COLIN

Here, give me the camera so you can get in the shot.

ALLIE

Wait. You and mom have to get in the shot first, Dad. I want to take a picture too.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Colin and Nia walked over to the middle of the chamber. There is sometimes an awkward moment when two people who haven't touched each other in what seemed like a very long time are forced into intimacy.

(MORE)



DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 Not because they don't want to, but because they do. And, as adults are prone to do, they've overcomplicated something so simple. So, there they stood, nearly shoulder to shoulder their smiles a little strained. Ethan glanced over at his parents and could sense how uncomfortable they were immediately (children are very in tune to those sorts of things in case you didn't know). Like children often do, he decided to make it worse.

ETHAN  
 Get closer mom and dad.

COLIN  
 We'll block your light if we do.

ALLIE  
 Seriously if you two don't get closer I'm gonna banish you to another realm where you're permanently stuck together.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
 Allie and Ethan didn't realize it but the moment Allie said "banish you to another realm," the chamber did what it's meant to do, which meant that Nia and Colin Croft disappeared.

SFX: Transition

7 INT. STONE CHAMBER - NIGHT

7

DANIEL (V.O.)  
 Chapter 2 - No, but seriously, where are we? "You think the only people who are people are the people who look and think like you. But if you walk the footsteps of a stranger, you'll learn things you never knew you never knew." - Colors of the Wind

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 To be teleported for the first time is an incredibly odd sensation. It's a full body tingle that's somehow just a little different from the way it feels when your foot falls asleep.  
 (MORE)

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
It's followed by a bright flash of light in front of your eyes, causing you to blink, and then bam, you're somewhere new. The first thing Colin and Nia noticed was that their children were no longer in front of them.

COLIN  
Allie? Ethan?

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Nia was the first to realize the chamber was... different. There was the same window behind them, but it was dark out. Inside the chamber there were rectangular shaped crystals embedded into the stone, and they were glowing, providing the room with a warm, soothing light.

NIA  
(confused)  
Colin...

COLIN  
What just happened?

NIA  
I don't know. Allie! Ethan!

8 EXT. STONE CHAMBER - NIGHT

8

DANIEL (V.O.)  
If they needed more proof that they were not where they had been originally, here it was. Night had suddenly fallen, an almost full moon hanging low in the sky. As Colin and Nia exited the chambre it was easy for them to see that the landscape was nearly identical because tall, gleaming silver rods stretched a good seven feet above the ground. Circular shaped crystals sat on their tops, glowing with the same soothing tone as the ones inside the chamber. It wasn't quiet, the woods around them were alive with wildlife, but Nia and Colin also noticed that while some sounds were familiar others were not.  
(MORE)

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
In between the crickets hum and the true katydids there were voices, and giggles, but they were faint and sounded to Nia and Colin almost... ethereal.

Let's hear what Daniel is describing.

COLIN  
Ethan! Allie! Is that you out there!?

NIA  
That's not them, Colin.

COLIN  
How did we lose daylight?

NIA  
Where are we? And where are the kids?

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Now, usually when faced with the sudden disappearance of one's children, parents are highly upset, frantic even. Colin and Nia, while concerned, were not at that level of panic. That was because instinctively on a level they were not yet ready to recognize, they knew their children were fine. Before either of them could answer the other one's question, they heard voices echo out from the chamber. A second later out walked a very handsome man with long, straight blonde hair, a pointed nose, and Colin and Nia realized with some amazement, pointed ears. Very pointed ears. Elf like pointed ears. With the man was a young boy, no more than eight or nine, that shared his father's remarkable features. He was looking up at his father in pure childlike excitement.

THALION  
That was great practice, Dad!

CALANON  
You did exceptionally well! Your mind is getting stronger every day.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
It was then, Calanon noticed Nia and Colin.

(MORE)

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
At first, he looked surprised, but  
not for the reason you might think.

CALANON  
Oh my goodness. Well, hello. We  
usually don't see you in these parts.

THALION  
Kipooey! I thought I'd have to travel  
a hundred thousand miles to see you!

CALANON  
(amused)  
Now, Thalion don't exaggerate. Humans  
don't live that far away.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
At this point, Colin and Nia were  
both thoroughly confused. They looked  
at each other then back at the  
couple. Colin frowned. His first  
thought was that the man in front of  
them was obviously a lunatic. Nia, on  
the other hand, thought the man must  
be playing with his son and was loath  
to break character, whatever that  
might be.

NIA  
Excuse us. I'm Nia, this is my  
husband, Colin. Did you just come  
from inside that chamber?

CALANON  
Well, hello, Colin and Nia. I'm  
Calanon and this is my son, Thalion.  
And yes, of course, we did. It's the  
fastest method of transportation  
around here and it's high time for  
Thalion to exercise his mental  
muscles. Didn't you come from the  
chamber?

COLIN  
Transportation? That chamber?

CALANON  
Yes. That chamber.

COLIN  
And your son knows how to operate it?

CALANON  
Very well. He gets better every day.

COLIN  
How is he able to do that?

CALANON  
With his mind of course.

NIA  
With his mind?

CALANON  
Yes. How else would he do it?

COLIN  
With a button, or a control panel, or something more realistic maybe?

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Calanon was beginning to grow uncomfortable under Colin's disapproving eyes. He took a step back from Colin and Nia, drawing his son closer to him.

CALANON  
Are you two feeling all right?

COLIN  
I'm fine. It's you I'm worried about. Seriously, I need to know how this thing works so I can get back to my children.

CALANON  
I told you how it works. I don't understand why you won't listen. And your children should know how it works. If you're not teaching them you're in violation of the law, you know. Human's don't get a free pass.

THALION  
My elementals instructor told me Humans got banished to the upper islands because they were arrogant and mean. Is that true? You don't look mean,

COLIN  
Your what?

DANIEL (V.O.)

Nia, who realized the situation was wildly spiraling out of hand, smiled and stepped forward to use her body as a bit of a buffer between her husband and the strange people in front of them. She smiled at Calanon and Thalion.

NIA

Excuse him, he's had a long day.  
Thank you for your help.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Calanon eyed the two of them suspiciously now. His son tugged impatiently on his hand.

THALION

C'mon Da! I don't want to miss the new moon ceremony!

CALANON

All right, all right, Thalion.  
Namaste, you two.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Calanon took his son by the hand and led him down a lighted trail that went into the woods.

COLIN

What a nut job.

NIA

You're not helping the situation by calling him that.

COLIN

I couldn't ask the question in any clearer English, Nia. Why would he think that?

NIA

It doesn't matter. We've obviously gone somewhere. Let's just figure out how to use this thing.

COLIN

That's ridiculous. We couldn't have gone anywhere.

NIA

Look around, Colin, did you see these light posts earlier? Or how about the ones in the chamber?

COLIN

It's impossible. How could we have gone somewhere else?

NIA

That's the million dollar question of the day isn't it? I'm going back inside to try and figure out where the control panel or whatever is.

COLIN

Yeah, you do that. I'm going to go walk over to the SUV, get my cell phone, and call the kids to find out where they are.

NIA

You do that.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Nia turned her back on him, walking into the chamber. Colin stood there for just a moment. He gave his head a hard shake and stalked off in the direction he was certain he'd left the car. Funny thing about fear based "certainty" against an impossible gut instinct, one always wins out over the other. Guess which? At any rate, Colin walked and Colin walked. Sometimes in a straight line, sometimes in a circle. He backtracked. He stopped and stared and walked forward again. But, try as he might, he could not find the location they'd left the vehicle. It was as if it simply didn't exist anymore.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Nia wasn't having much better luck inside the chamber. She searched the walls, the floors, and the strange lamps. She pressed on stones, ran her finger nail into crevices.

(MORE)

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
She even kicked the wall a few times when her frustration got the better of her but try as she might, she could not find the chambers control panel.

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Though in two different places, Nia and Colin gave up their searches at the exact same time. Nia dropped her back against the wall, her arms folded in front of her, a deep, frustrated frown on her face. Colin began his walk back to the chamber, stomping a bit like a frustrated child.

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
And at that moment, inside the chamber where Nia stood, the Malak arrived. The Malak were the police force of Meiketh, the place Nia and Colin had journeyed too. Rest assured it is not so far from your own dimension. The walls between dimensions are much thinner and easier to traverse than you might imagine.

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
The Malak appeared human but were deceiving creatures; capable of shapeshifting into the animal they most resonated with. The two that appeared in front of Nia were wearing immaculately pressed dark blue uniforms with <describe symbol> on the front of right front breast of their uniforms.

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
What gave away that they were not human were their tails. Curved bushy tails like you'd find on a Siberian husky extended from their backsides (a space was made in the uniform to accommodate their physique of course). Nia was quite startled at their appearance because they literally just appeared. There was no warning, one minute she was alone, the next she was not.

(MORE)



DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
To be fair, there was some warning but if you didn't notice what to look for, it would be easy to miss. When one is about to teleport oneself the space in front of them ripples ever so subtly, it takes on a water like quality, a translucent ripple in the fabric of space and time. Nia blinked several times staring at the men in clear shock. They didn't look nearly as surprised to see her.

BARLEY  
Are yooou the human known as Niiia-ah?

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Well, poor Nia just couldn't find her voice. Once she got over the fact they appeared out of nowhere, she noticed their tails. And when her brain confirmed that what her eyes were seeing was correct, that was more a shock that poor Nia could take and she fainted.

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Thankfully Malak are very fast creatures and the one without a mustache caught her, saving her from a painful bump on the head. At that moment Colin walked into the chamber.

COLIN  
I have no friggin idea where the damn car is-

DANIEL (V.O.)  
What a scene this was for him! Two strange stern-faced men, sporting unfamiliar uniforms, and tails no less were standing there, with one of them holding his wife.

COLIN  
What the hell are you, and what did you do to my wife!

BARLEY  
Are yooou the human known as C-Leeeeeein?

COLIN

Get your damn paw off me! What did you do to her? Nia?! Nia are you all right?

CHARLIE

(reassuring)

Calm down human. She fainted is all.

BARLEY

Feeeh tha love of... I asked yooou a question 'uman. Are yooou Cooo-liiin?

COLIN

What? Yes, yes I'm Colin if that's what you're trying to say. What... who are you?

CHARLIE

By order of his Angelicness Raziel, overseer of the dominion known as Meiketh, you are under arrest for the crime of wrongful parenting.

COLIN

Excuse me?

BARLEY

If I were yooou, I'd be keepin my 'outh shut right aboot now.

DANIEL (V.O.)

It took Colin a moment to translate what the Malak had just said, and in that time Colin, Nia, and the Malaks disappeared.