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## The Changeling Event

It happened in the middle of the night.

Nature was struck with a silence as thick and as heavy as its starless skies. The very molecules in the air had stopped their circular dances and the atmosphere held within its grasp a moment of magic. Far above, in a gentle space of goodness somewhere between the earth and its moon, a council was being called to order. It was a fine governing body of wise beings from many dwelling places including a few from Mareithia, the sacred forest, and Sevenaaz the vast and ancient sea.

It seemed this last while that some inhabitants from the mountains of mauve and the meadowlands had had strange experiences concerning their dreams and their everyday events. Some claimed to have seen light forms radiating peace and goodwill within their very dwellings. Others, admiring spider webs in the misted meadows or slipping with warm toes into a neighbouring stream, described how suddenly the grasses would change shape or the water change colour. And now, this very evening all had become mysteriously motionless in this alien land. Nothing peeped and no fragrance slipped through the delicate petals of the flowers nearby. What had caused such an unusual situation and what was to be done?

After a moment of fervent praise to the Glory of Creation, the council members brought their minds together and formed one bright golden ray of light. With open hearts, they shone their love and their light down to the inhabitants and their world.

It was then they discovered that a particular butterfly had unintentionally caused a series of events to occur. This is the story.

Some days ago, the weather upon the land had been quite warm. Faynella, a recently widowed young woman and her lifelong friend, Serri, had spent the afternoon walking along the stream that nourished the wild willows. Faynella had opened her sore and lonely heart to her friend. Serri's compassion and understanding had soothed Faynella and encouraged her to build a new life.

“Let’s sit here by this great willow and have our picnic,” Serri suggested gently, bringing a sorrowful Faynella close to an exquisite rock covered with luminescent moss. Her friend gave a short nod and with red-rimmed eyes looked around vaguely. As Serri spread the brightly patterned cloth of yellow and orange on the ground, Faynella suddenly had a strong sense that someone was watching her from the great stone.

Faynella whispered urgently, pointing to the rock that was somewhat behind her. “Serri, I feel that someone is here with us. Can you see anything?”

“Hmmm, perhaps it’s your guardian angel,” answered the mischievous Serri with laughing lips and moved to where her friend was pointing.

At that moment from behind the ancient and majestic rock, a shimmering gold and purple butterfly the size of Faynella’s hand delicately landed on the silken moss of fairy green. Right in front of the astonished Serri! Faynella had yet to turn around.

“Fay-nell-a,” said Serri slowly, pronouncing every syllable as if it were new, “look at this beautiful visitor!”

As Faynella turned, the exquisite butterfly changed its shape and before them both stood a perfectly formed man of golden and purple light. As a tremendous smile of deep love passed from him to both women, Faynella broke into tears and spat out, “Get away from me. Get away, now!”

Her friend, motionless, filled with awe from the sheer beauty and brilliance of the being, fleetingly noticed a moment of sadness streak across the face of this glorious man-form. Suddenly, he was gone and both women were left staring at a large, dull, mossy rock.

Serri knew better that to ask Faynella for an explanation. Her friend bathed in suffering and outside help would always remain just that—outside help. Serri knew very well that should the loving fire within Faynella be rekindled, her flame would once again warm herself and the world around her.

The days following the “changeling event” as Serri quietly called it, Faynella withdrew from the people. She began to feel bitterness and jealousy whenever she heard the joyous laughter of others. Her power grew dark and her thoughts hard and devious. When she tore Serri’s

fine friendship into small, even pieces and threw them into a biting wind, the stars moved away from the earth. The ground stood still. Perfumes no longer swirled around the trees and the small creatures near the stream grew quiet.

All of this the council patiently observed from far above the earth.

“It seems that your visit caused a great stir in the land,” remarked one wise being from Mareithia to a perfectly formed man of light who sat close by. The man of light said nothing but felt great sadness.

“Do not be discouraged,” stated another great one from Sevenaaz. “There will be other opportunities.” The man of light gave an acknowledging smile knowing that what was being said was very true.

It was concluded at the council meeting that, although the fragrance and the gentle motion of the earth would be restored, very little else would be done to rectify the situation. With time, those inhabitants who experienced the glowing beings of goodwill within their dwellings could either use the privileged opportunity to contact them through pure heart, or discourage them by ignoring their presence. Those villagers seeing the structural changes of the grasses or the unusual dazzlingly colours of the water, would eventually understand that it was quite a normal occurrence when worlds moved in and out of each other.

For Faynella, a greater destiny was in store. Later in life when Faynella let go of self-pity she would show others how to foster strength in difficult situations. But for now it was the generous and patient Serri who was her guide. She would be the one responsible for moving her lifelong friend, Faynella, from the very small world of self-absorption to the ever expanding universe of noble achievement.