

**THE SHOCK**

First Short Story

by

**Tombstone Grady**

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**“THIS STORY IS DEDICATED TO A VERY OLD FRIEND”**

**TOMBSTONE GRADY.**

# The Shock

By

TOMBSTONE GRADY

On a cold cloudy night, a heart full of love throbbed excitedly. The heart belonged to a beautiful girl who gazed at her image in the mirror trying to decide in what she would look her best. Outside snow had begun to fall, though not heavily; it was the perfect time for two hearts to bond together. Sarah chose her dress checking the time and wore a black coat over it. Her dress was blood red and frilly. Her eyes gazed at the wall clock and she jumped. *"Shit I'm late?"*

She ran towards the street where her sweet love waited to elope with her. No longer was Sarah going to be alone; for her, a beginning of the good time had come. Sarah was a woman in her early twenties but her slim figure, huge innocent eyes and long sleek ebony hair gave her the look of a teen age doll. She had led a hard life for her parents died in a car crash while they were coming home from a dinner when she was at the age of 12. Her neighbour, Miss Martha had broken the news to her. That night Sarah had cried a lot and the next day she was shoved into an orphanage for she was without a guardian. Life at orphanage was a difficult stage for Sarah, she made some friends there and shared a few happy moments with them but she never got along the strict rules of the orphanage. People who ran the orphanage were harsh and corrupt and the building of the orphanage was shabby.

From the moment Sarah stepped into the orphanage she knew that things were not right at this place. The kids were not allowed to leave the buildings at any time without a "caretaker."

*"More like a hate pig" Sarah always thought looking at those callous faces.*

No one was allowed to leave their rooms at night while many nights it happened that the warden would enter a kid's dormitory and take one with him. The kid was never seen again. To others it seemed they were adopted but Sarah's sixth sense told her that there was something wrong. When by luck she had reached the age of seventeen, she found a way to scurry out of her room at night and discovered that the orphanage was actually a setup

which sold children as slaves to different Mafia leaders so they could do there dirty work. After all it was easier to bend children to their bidding and fulfill their lust as well. That night by great luck, Sarah had escaped the nightmare and had run straight to Aunt Martha who had visited her a few times.

It was later that she learned that due to Aunt Martha, Sarah had survived five years in orphanage for she had been trying to adopt her. Aunt Martha immediately called the police and after some long court hearings the orphanage was demolished. Not long after, Aunt Martha had succumbed to a heart attack leaving Sarah alone, but until then Sarah was legally an adult and had inherited her parent's home. She completed her education and got a job at a computer graphics center where she worked often late at nights to avoid the loneliness of her life.

*But that was all my past and now I have a wonderful future ahead.*

With that happy thought Sarah stepped into the faint light which marked the entry into her beloved's street. She felt thrilled to the pit. Life with James was going to be wonderful. *Peace at last*, thought Sarah. A few more memories flooded in her mind but these were all pleasant; After all it was her beloved James's memories. How could she forget the first night they had met, the great dinners they had had and the enchanting hours with each other when work started to feel a burden for Sarah and all she would think was of rushing out with James to somewhere peaceful where they could talk till eternity. *Finally that time has come!*

It happened one very rainy night when every street of "Stranded Town" was flooded with heavy rain. *"Darn my worst day ever!"* Sarah had had a very bad day. First she woke up late with a headache and had to rush to the hospital chewing a few tablets of aspirin. *Didn't help much though!* Then she got quite a scolding from her boss for being late and for not completing the graphics design for a software in the dead line. *"Darn the Bastard, I need only one day more," she fumed.* And then the heavy downpour which turned her heart gloomier; her shoe broke and she was left alone to stumble in the streets under the heavy rain. Her head was filled with constantly pounding voices:

*Late*

*Lazy, Poor performance*

*Disgraced the company*

*My poor luck*

*Oh Mother!*

*Oh Father!*

*Oh Aunty!*

The pounding continued and became even more maddening, the thoughts of her worst nightmares came live again;

Sarah!

Oh Sarah! Where are YOU?

Ceaser is coming to find you!

Sarah! Sarah! Where are You?

Be a good girl... THERE YOU ARE YOU FREAK!

“NO,” screamed Sarah and sat down in the middle of the street. After that everything happened in a flash and all Sarah heard and saw was a loud horn and a flash of yellow lights with the sounds of braking and smell of burning rubber coming towards her.

Then as if lightening grabbed her and swept her away from the face of death. The truck crossed with the driver screaming some obscenity at her while her rescuer ushered him away and said, “Oh my God. Are you alright? Good God, You were nearly dead.”

“Th...tann... Thank...yYYo!” stuttered Sarah.

“You are shaken to the pits. Man you must be in a lot of pressure to get so nutty to sit in the middle of the street.”

“I am fine?” Sarah repeated more forcefully.

“Indeed you are. Perhaps I am a fool to believe that you are hurt but I must insist that you get your head out of this storming rain and have a cup of either hot chocolate or coffee to shake away the memory of this incident.”

“No I’ll just walk home...”

And for the first time she glanced at her rescuer, a man in his late twenties, with handsome features and jet black hair. He was looking at her seriously and his honey colour eyes were really intense that they made Sarah stop saying whatever she was intending to say.

“No I must insist. You look as you will fall if you walk another few steps. Really let me take you to Peter’s Café, its just there, look, right in front of you. Come with me,” said the rescuer and took her hand helping her up. He was correct, Sarah really felt drained by the whole incident and she leaned heavily on the handsome man.

In a few moments, they were seated in a cozy café with mild lamp lighting making everything look warm and soothing. Sarah immediately felt calm. Then she realized that she had not asked the stranger’s name or introduced herself.

As the rescuer returned with the coffee, Sarah said, “Hi my name is Sarah.”

“I am James, it’s a pleasure to meet you Miss...”

“Caramel... though you may call me Sarah... I prefer my first name.”

James looked at her curiously and said, “You seem quite an interesting person.”

“Really I may be the dullest person you have ever met in your whole life.”

“We can see about that... really how anyone working so successfully at, “Computer Graphics Company” for so many years can be a dull person?”

Sarah looked at him surprised and said, “How do you know that?”

“Lady I have been working in the same company as yours yet you have failed to notice many people. I have been walking with you on these same streets while you returned home and I have been watching you struggling with your life. It really seems as if people are ghost to your eyes.”

“It’s not that... Its just that my past...”

“Drink your coffee, it will get cold and then will be of little use,” said James and smiled the most dazzling smile she had ever seen on a face.

The hours of the night passed enchantingly and they talked about a lot of things. After that night it became a routine for them to have regular cups of coffee at Peter’s Café.

*“My worst day ever! Really? MY BEST DAY EVER!”*

She gazed at the three story gothic styled house. *How did he got his hands on such a big thing, she thought.* “Well I am finally here. And now I am here I feel really nervous.”

*Hell don’t worry darling, James will make everything fine for you.*

Sarah took a few steps on the pavement and felt the cold wind of the winter beat against her body harshly and she winced but still could not manage to take faster steps towards the great wooden door. *I think I’m going to faint. Oh God Please not now! NOT TODAY! This isn’t fair.*

She knocked on the door expecting it to open up immediately though after five minutes there was no answer. Sarah waited outside panting hard in the cold wind of the winter. *Come on darling, open up. Your “Bride” is waiting dear Jammy, where are you?*

“James, it’s me, Sarah, open up?” *Sorry bride, don’t think you suit my style*

*10 minutes up, the terror begins.*

Sarah began to panic and banged harder on the door. “James. James. Please open up. You can’t do this to me?” she sobbed.

*Eleven minutes gone, you have lost.*

“Who are you,” a rough voice of a man roared behind her, “Why disturb the silent residents of this house at this time of the night?”

Sarah turned around to see a rough old man with wisps of yellowish hair and a highly wrinkled face, bent with age and eyes as red as blood, leaning on a long stick looking at her with fury. *Or was it some kind of hate.*

"I...sir... I am Sarah Caramel and I was waiting for Mr. James to open the door. We... We were going to marry."

The old man took a few steps towards her and her legs began to shake terribly. *For God's sake, Sarah! control yourself. Be a brave girl.*

Sarah felt a deep fear arise in her.

*12 minutes up, The reign of Fear.*

"Marry!" the old man whispered, " marry... Master James."

"Yes do you know where he is?"

The old man grabbed Sarah's arm and she felt pain seer through it. The old man had an iron grip and remarkable strength as he raged through the pavement, Sarah tumbling behind him crying between sobs due to the pain. The old man turned to the side lawn and loosened his grip. Sarah fell on the floor, a stone hit her head. She stopped sobbing as the pain through her head shocked her understanding.

*Thirteen minutes up, the toll of death.*

*Din Dong Ding Dong Ding Dong*

All Sarah could her was a bell ringing somewhere and then the old man said in a whisper, "You must be crazy lady. Look if you can read. There is no Master James in the world of living anymore."

With this he left Sarah gazing at the stone which read

*James C ser*

*1986-2005*

*"May all your dreams be fulfilled weather ye be in this world or the other"*

Sarah felt her head spinning and she blacked out falling on the tomb.

She was walking down a long corridor alone. She could feel as someone was watching her, spying on her, stalking her in the dark. All her secrets lay bare and there was no one to protect her from this monster; no one to save her sanity. She was naked... naked in the dark.

*Á lonely girl should never live by herself. Come to me Sarah. I am your destiny. Ceaser is waiting... waiting for you.*

“Someone please...help me.... Help me...” screamed Sarah but her voice seemed drowned as in water.

*There is no one to save you from my gaze my dear. I CAN SEE YOU. I CAN FEEEEEEELLLLLLLLLL You.*

Sarah felt her breathing going down and heart beat dropping. Death was finely upon her.

*You are mine and mine alone. Come to me Sweet heart. Have a taste of my love. COME TO ME. The terrible voice spoke.*

Sarah could feel the haunting terrible night again and how she had escaped from the orphanage. That terrible night when she was left all alone when her parent died relived in her mind.

*Sarah I am upon you. I.... can touch you.*

Sarah screamed as the agonizing flames covered her body. She was in her deepest state of torment. “Leave me. Please Leave me. Don’t hurt me... Please leave me. James... somebody...save me...save me. For God’s sake save me.”

*Wake up Sarah. It’s going to be fine.*

The faint glowing voice became stronger and the pain disappeared.

“Wake up sweet heart. Wake up. Everything is going to be fine.”

“James... James,” she mumbled.

“Yes it’s alright darling. Come on wake up.”

She felt his warm hands sliding down her back and she opened her eyes and blinked several times when she realized that she was in a dark hall lit with candles, where she was safely snuggled in James's embrace.

She leaped in the air and looked at him crazily.

"You...You..." she spoke in a weak voice pointing a finger at James, "You're alive!"

"Ah I see. You fell for our gardener's old crazy ideas as well. It seems Mr. Smith will need to be locked up in an asylum for good; he got quite carried away this time."

"What?"

"Let me explain. Mr. Smith is our gardener. He is the old man you met outside the house. I must apologize for being late to open the door as I was busy in some preparation. Mr. Smith is quite old, about 90, and has been seeing things for some time. It was he who planted the fake tombstone outside as he saw my death."

"Saw your death..."

"Not literally, he was seeing illusions. I was afraid, you might be dead when I opened the door and found you lying in the garden."

Sarah felt a cold shiver run through her again as she felt the ghost of the pain in her dream pass through her again.

"I must say, you look dazzling, my lady."

Sarah smiled and said, "And you sir, look as charming as ever."

"Well then Miss Sarah Caramel will you join me in a dance and then bond with me in the ancient bond of marriage at midnight?"

"Not at all, my Lord," replied Sarah teasingly, all her tension evaporated.

A faint music began to play and James took Sarah's hand and they began to dance. Each step they took made them relive their many memories together.

It was a cold night and Sarah walked up the enormous terrace of “Hotel de Romantica.” She felt odd walking through the young couples engrossed deeply in their conversation with their heads joined together. “Why has James invited me here?” thought Sarah, “It’s the oddest place ever.”

Everywhere there were red flowers and red carpets and red cloths and red curtains and red umbrellas; though most of the balloons were white. It took some moments to spot James waving at her, a red rose in his hands. Sarah felt a strange feeling of precognition but she just smiled and walked over to him.

“How are you Sarah.?”

“Fine James.”

“Hope it didn’t take long to find me.”

“No it was the easiest work ever.’

“Good that makes sense.”

“James! Don’t pretend.”

“Very well my lady. Let me first say something,” said James enthusiastically and then coughed a little while Sarah acted to clean her nails. “Very well. Miss Sarah Caramel, I cannot explain, how deeply I have fallen in love with you and that I cannot live without you a single day in this life. Would you honour me by accepting this Ring?”

Sarah was taken aback. She had not expected James to be so straight forward in this matter and she found the beautiful emerald ring slipping down her finger. Her face turned red as she saw James smiling at her. *So seductive that smile, Oh if only I could stop time in this way forever.*

That whole night they danced along the other couples and talked little; just gazed into each other’s eyes. They were alone in their worlds, together forever. *My God she really is a beauty, thought James.*

*Oh I love when he smiles at me. I just love when his hands slide on my back, thought Sarah.*

*She is my match.... my perfect match. I swear I cannot live without her in any life, thought James.*

James smiled again at Sarah and they drew closer to each other... so close until thought of everything else was lost and they were gone in a deep warm glowing sensation.

Sarah looked at James, her eyes watery and glowing, she whispered, "Don't ever leave me James neither in this world nor in death."

She drew closer and snuggled in the warmth of his chest. They kept dancing in the cold room lit by candles, their bodies keeping each other warm.

James patted her head and whispered in a low quite gentle voice, "Don't worry my love, for we will be bonded till eternity."

"Eternity...huh...I like that."

She tore from his embrace, her eyes boring into the gold of his eyes. She was smiling weakly, and said, "Rather I love that. It's just that.... It's impossible."

James face came closer until his forehead joined with hers and he said, "Nothing is impossible if you want it sweet heart."

Sarah smiled and they were again lost to the deep sensation that they had felt on the night they were engaged and a thousand times afterwards; however, this time it was more beautiful, more blissful... mingled in their fears it was better than ever.

*Love reigns above all lights; a light which draws the darkness away*

They kissed deeply until all the darkness from their heart was gone and their emotions reached a peak. They were exhausted but could not let go of each other. It was then that evil struck the hardest, their most precious moment. James grip tightened on Sarah growing stronger and stronger.

Sarah tore from James and said, "James you're hurting me. Stop it."

"Never sugar. I'll never leave you. You are mine... you were destined to be mine and you ran from your fate."

*That voice, thought Sarah, I know that voice. It cannot be. You cannot be back from the dead.*

“You will love it what I am going to do to you. Won’t you sugar?”

It took all her strength to tear away from James and she fell on the ground screaming, “You... You, it cannot be. I... killed you... I killed you.”

In front of her stood a naked body, rotting, the face was highly mutilated and the hands were bloody while the rest of the body was seeping with oozy pus. Flesh was torn apart from many parts of the body.

Sarah was going to faint, tears streaming her eyes.

The body laughed and said, “Ceaser will not leave you. Ceaser likes to touch you.”

The body bent on her restricting her escape. “Ahhhhh... such a soft skin. Such a sweet scent,” he moaned sliding a slimy finger down her face to the navel.

Bloody pain ripped through Sarah and she started to wriggle to escape the incinerating fire. “James,” she screamed.

“James... I am James, your love and you are mine for eternity,” roared the monster blowing a sick stench in her face. She was going cold, fading from the world, everything was lost... her trust broken and all her eyes could see was the tomb, she could read it clearly now:

James Ceaser

1985-2005

*“May all your dreams be fulfilled weather ye be in this world or the other”*

*Indeed his dream was fulfilled. He had touched her in every life and now he was taking her... draining her from this world. She closed her eyes and felt the pain disappear. The nightmare was over... finally... perhaps the hereafter had something better in store for her.*

“We found the body, professor.”

“She’s dead?”

“Shock... A stroke perhaps,” replied the man in black blue uniform.

A reporter was behind him. Professor Cowley recognized her and said, “Yes what do you want?”

“Her story, professor. Who was she? How did she die?”

“Ah, Miss Sarah Caramel! Quit a sad story indeed. A poor soul,” the professor said nodding.

The reporter took out a note pad and began to scribble. She looked at the professor and said, “This is the first time anyone ever escaped the grounds of the asylum, right?”

“Indeed, Miss Vicky. I am quite surprised but Miss Caramel was not insane. Not in the normal sense. The poor soul suffered from Schizophrenia. I would say, what happened to her was better than what was happening to her.”

“Schizophrenia... professor’s opinion,” muttered the reporter scribbling everything down.

“Her parent died when she was at the age of 12 and she was sent to an orphanage. It was their when everything initially began but the real effects followed afterwards. Miss Caramel revealed her worst horrors when we placed her in hypnosis. She found the orphanage as a set up to sell children... must have heard of the famous event a few years ago?”

“Indeed professor.”

“Very good. What the people did not know was that Mrs. Caramel was raped the night of her escape by one of the caretakers who had been stalking her for a long time. It was he who had raised the alarm of her that night. However Mrs. Caramel killed him... must have taken every ounce of courage to do that in her state.”

The reporter stopped writing looking up shocked and then she lowered her head, “My God! She must have lived in fear for the rest of her life.”

“It was fear indeed, which ate her away. She could never trust a man again in her whole life. She was helped by her neighbor but Sarah did not tell her what had passed her. Later, she saw someone die trying to save her from a road accident though according to her, there was a man named James who saved her and she believed He loved her.”

“And that I believe was her imagination.”

“Yes after the death of her Aunt, the nieghbour, she was left all alone and so her mind built a separate character to protect her from the loneliness. The mind is a very complex study madam,” said Professor Cowley.”

“When was she brought to this asylum professor and how do you believe her death occurred?”

“She was brought on the same day of her accident for I was there by chance and I recognized her symptoms when I took her to a café to calm her. She kept talking to someone I could not see. To her others had disappeared,” the professor paused and then continued, “Her death is also easy to answer. She suffered a terrible shock. Not long ago, I have witnessed the identities of William Ceaser, the care taker who dishonored her and James, the man who was her love had started to merge together. She was in deep fear that Ceaser was going to return one day to..., ‘touch her,’ in her own words. Her body was found today in an old abandoned building by a very old gardener who informed the police and so we found her.”

“Such a sad story professor, I wish no woman should ever face such a terrible disaster,” said Miss Vicky Vale in a quiet whisper.

Far away in the old abandoned building, a gardener built a tomb beside the one present there. This one read:

Sarah James Ceaser

1987-2012

*“May your soul belong to him till eternity”*

An evil grin crossed his face and he picked up the shovel and left for the silent residents of the house must rest in peace

##### **THE END** #####

