



Losing my Rapunzel

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Retold Fairy Tales

I always wanted a daughter of my own, but unfortunately, I remained barren. I seduced many men with my glamorous ways, but none of them provided me with the child I so desperately wanted. Instead, the plants I grew and the potions I created became my children. I poured love and a quiet kind of magic into the task of tending my garden and working with the plants which grew profusely.

I had always been a bit different. The villagers recognized a fierce, wild power within me and were frightened of my abilities. That is, unless they were seeking my help, and then they would come to me during the witching hour—as quietly as mice, with furtive expressions on their bland faces. Mostly it was over some silly notion of love. What did they know of love?

Once it was my nearest neighbor, a woman I was genuinely fond of. Her husband was a lazy lay about and they were quite poor. The woman, Coralie, deserved so much more. She was timid, but had a loving heart. She solicited my help with a matter most dear to her heart. She wanted what I had always yearned for too, a child. I gave her a potion containing herbs to boost fertility, but honestly, I didn't expect it would work. Turns out it was the husband who was infertile.

Coralie came to me weeks later. Her husband had to journey for a time and in his absence that demon Jacob had taken advantage of Coralie. She was desperate and begged me to help get rid of the child. Can you believe that? First, she had desired a child more than anything in the world and now she wanted to kill the child? So, I did what any intelligent woman would do should she find herself in my situation. I struck a bargain.

Coralie's idiot of a husband played his role perfectly, unbeknownst to him. I caught him stealing herbs from my garden, herbs I had cultivated from tiny seeds. I told him he could have as much of the dratted herb as he

wanted so long as he gives me his child when she was born. The vile man agreed, didn't even attempt to argue his way out of it. I mean, what kind of a father gives up his child so readily? The child deserved much more. The day I heard the newborn cry of my daughter was magic to my ears. When I first glanced at her, I knew she was mine. She was a star child, the answer to my prayers. I did feel a moment of regret when I saw the expression on Rapunzel's birth mother's face, but as she was too weak to put up much of a fight I knew she wouldn't have made a good mother.

The first few years of Rapunzel's life were golden. She was my magic child, my little witch. We had many happy days together. And then Jacob began to make eyes at her. Oh no, I couldn't have that. What was I to do? I knew I couldn't protect her forever, but I would do my best. It broke my heart to lock her away in her tower, but rather than the alternative.

We moved far away. I thought it was enough, but in the end a man did take her from me—Jacob's son of all the people in the world. Isn't that ironic? He ruined her. She was no longer my innocent daughter, but was despoiled by a despicable man. I admit I reacted rather horribly. My rage was too great. I sent her away. My darling daughter. My golden child. My Rapunzel. I've searched for her ever since, but to no avail. Every night I pray that my child will return to me, but so far, I remain alone. And now it is I locked in the tower with no one to comfort me. The sound of laughter has faded to be replaced with the sour, sickly silence of grief.

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