

## Facing You By Shirin G.

“Ahrghgh” screeched Mira, as the crow arrived for its daily visit. It drifted between the bars of her cage.

All her life Mira had lived, untouched, by anyone because she was terrified of people. When she was a young girl her mother had abandoned her and since then she had been so scared to trust and love again. Which meant that she couldn't live with people.

One day a crow started visiting, Mira didn't mind him because she knew that that crow couldn't ever do anything as cruel as humans could. Over time they became friends and soon the crow started to visit her everyday. Her life went on like this with the crow for eons.

Then, something changed. One day the crow brought by letters. The letters were from someone called “S.G.” and the crow had told him about Mira and he wanted to give her some hope. When the letters started coming, she was aghast at the idea that this guy had wanted to talk to her and, just possibly, he might care about her. So, she replied. After months of the letters between Mira and “S.G.”, Mira felt like she was part of someone. It had been ages since she had felt cared about and it felt really good. It made her feel like she was alive again.

Mira and S.G. had formed a routine with their letters: on every Monday night the crow would bring Mira letter from S.G.. She would write a reply by Wednesday when the crow would take it to S.G.. Then one Monday, there was no letter. Mira knew it. She knew that it was too good to be true. No one would ever care about her the way that she thought they would; like she thought S.G. did. When her mom had left her, there was a spot in her heart that belonged to her mom, and now there was a hole in its place. Over the past months Mira had let herself fill that spot with S.G.. Now that spot was empty AGAIN!

The next morning Mira didn't want to wake up, because if she woke up that would mean that the letter HAD never come, and that no one cared about her just like before. Soon, though, she was forced up by the crow, who had brought a letter Mira remembered back to when S.G. had written that he lived in a war zone, and Mira could tell that the letter had blood on it. Slowly, she reached for the letter. Mira burst into tears, when she read the scrawled p.s., “I was hurt in a bombing, I am dying. But before I leave you, I wanted to tell you how much I love you and how much you have always mean to me. Goodbye.”

For the first time Mira felt driven and determined. So she HAD been wrong, he DID care about her, and she was going to save him if it was the last thing she did. Even if she had to face her fear of people. “Go and bring him to me!” Mira barked at the crow. “I can help him! I know it!” She continued. The crow nodded in response and left.

She waited through the rest of the day and through part of the night, when she finally saw two figures approaching, that she could only assume were the crow and S.G.. Her nerves jittered, but she paid no attention to them, distracting herself with preparing her old, crusty surgical tools that she had found in the landfill near her cage.

“Mira..?” Croaked a voice that Mira believed was S.G.’s. “Yes” replied Mira. It was the first word that she had spoken to another human, in as long as she could remember. “Come here,” Mira called out to the crow, “You can enter through this side.” Mira motioned towards a gate in her cage, for S.G. to walk through. “Thank you so much Mira” said S.G. as she started tending to his wounds. “You don’t have to do this you know” He continued. “Yes, I do. I will do it for you. I will NOT let you die. Not after how you’ve helped me become me again.” said Mira in a voice that was so demanding that not even the crow objected.

As Mira further assessed S.G.’s injuries she realized that he had lost a lot of blood to a heart leak wound. She registered the fact that he wouldn’t be able to survive without a heart transplant. Slowly, Mira cut out her own heart to give to S.G.. Because her mother was a doctor, Mira knew how to work strategically to make sure that she would live long enough after her heart was removed to resituate it in S.G.’s body. By the time she had re sewn her heart into S.G.’s body she was down to her last breaths. That’s when S.G. awoke. “Mira! What?! How?!” he sputtered, as he slowly realized what had happened. “NO! NO! no!...” S.G. cried. “Don’t leave me now...Please... “Goodbye...” Mira whispered letting her last breath escape.

S.G. sat, numbed, at what Mira had done. He let it sink in that he had lost her. When the crow saw what had happened, S.G. told him what had happened and the crow bowed his head, unable to prevent the tears for the loss of his most beloved friend. “She fought her greatest fear for me. She lived among people again, if only for a moment.” S.G.’s voice cracking.

Till this day, in a cage, near a landfill, there lies a tombstone. On it, there is engraved an inscription “Mira Lombard. A girl who fought her own greatest fear of facing people again, and sacrificed herself, for a friend who will be eternally grateful for such an act of kindness.”