

The Man Who  
**No One  
Loved**



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**PHAEDRA MOON**  
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Art by Norville Parchment



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# The Man Who No One Loved



PHAEDRA MOON

Art by **Norville Parchment**



FIRST EDITION

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, business, events and incidents are the products of the author's imagination. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

Phaedra Photo by Dana Brushette / Norville Photo by Jason Bediant

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**A**t the edge of the town, the green grass shriveled, and the generous earth became cracked and grey, and that's where the man lived who no one loved.

The people of the town were good natured and merry, and even though they found him very strange, they always invited him to their parties and festivals, but seemed a bit relieved that the man who no one loved would never come.



Eleanor, the blacksmith's daughter,  
was as lovely as the springtime and  
her eyes were a tangle of secrets  
that the townspeople could not  
unravel. **Her greatest  
joy was in playing her  
silver flute.** Sometimes she  
played alone in the green hills, and  
her songs would dance with the clouds  
and make the songbirds sing.







Most nights she would play under the stars for the many town dances and celebrations, which greatly bothered the boys, because they all wanted to win her heart, but she was never available to dance.

Eleanor would stomp and laugh as she played jigs and reels with the band, and the town's people would all watch her with keen interest.



The young boys gazed at her sullenly, resenting the flute for stealing away her time. The other young girls mooned in good natured envy. The matrons eyed her critically; Why wasn't she letting herself be

swept away to dance in the arms of one of these fine young men? The old men nodded approvingly. What a sensible girl! Not flitting about the boys like a honey bee, the way the other young girls did.





**But the children** would all squeal with delight, spinning in dizzying circles to the rollicking music and when Eleanor finally took a moment to lay down her flute

the children would all flock around her, and beg her to tell them all the stories she knew. (Which caused the boys to begrudge both flutes and children.)



Eleanor had never ventured west of their cozy homestead, because that is where the road ended, and the land became stark and mysterious...but in the evenings, while she bathed in the river, she would gaze towards the grey lands and wonder about the man who no one loved. She wondered why he stayed away, and whether he was lonely.

One day, the wind picked up her hair, and in a swooshing spiral, it pulled her towards the unknown lands. Eleanor hesitated only a moment, for she was a girl with great courage, and soon she found herself standing at the place where the road ends.





Not far off, she saw  
the campfire of the  
man who no one loved.

His silhouette appeared dark  
next to the dancing flame, yet  
somehow she felt a warm call of  
welcome, so she set off towards  
him to ask if she might sit with  
him for a while by his fire.





The man who no one loved looked up when she arrived, but he said nothing. “Why doesn’t he smile at me?” Eleanor wondered, for she had never met a man who didn’t smile when she approached. And suddenly, she felt uncertain of herself, and longed to go home to her cheerful neighbours and charming little country house.

“Will you sit down?” Asked the man who no one loved, and his voice was sweet sorrow. She noticed that although he didn’t smile, his eyes were full of wise compassion.



The strange silence moved her, and she searched the blazing fire for answers to a question she did not yet understand. Her hand fell to her flute, which lay in her pocket, but she didn't know the song of this place. She was afraid that she would play something that the man who no one loved wouldn't like, and this thought was too terrible to bear. But when she looked into his eyes, she saw that he had no expectations of her, and so she closed her eyes and lifted the flute to her lips, and breathed out a song full of longing and grief.








When the song ended, the sadness of it clung to the air between them, but Eleanor found that she didn't mind its presence. She lifted her eyes to look at the man who no one loved, and saw a gentle smile crack his dark face.

She asked him: "Won't you come back to the town with me? It is awfully sad here, and there's so much happiness where I live."

"No," Said the man. "Happiness is not my home. I will stay here by my fire, in case anyone decides to come and visit with their lonely heart."

And then, Eleanor knew that if it hadn't been for his gentle welcome, she would have been too afraid of this place to sit here long enough to know its sad beauty.





Eleanor didn't stay long, but  
she took her sad song  
back with her to the town  
and played it to the nervous confusion  
of her merry neighbours.





The young boys endured it restlessly, unable to unravel the riddle that would win her heart. The young girls listened feverishly, wondering at the small tug of longing they felt in their chests.

The matrons decided that she was more foolish than ever and would never have any hope of landing a husband. The old men started to wonder if they had been wrong about her, and perhaps she wasn't so sensible after-all.




But the children

knew, because Eleanor  
told them, that she had  
a sad secret heart.





The illustration depicts three stylized, dark-skinned figures dancing in a vibrant, dreamlike environment. The figures are rendered in a halftone or stippled style. The figure on the left is in a simple dance pose. The middle figure has a bright yellow head and is in a more dynamic pose. The figure on the right has a large, spiky orange head and is in a more expressive, almost acrobatic pose. The background is a soft, painterly mix of light blues, greens, and yellows, with faint, stylized blue floral patterns. The overall mood is nostalgic and emotional.

They loved to close their eyes  
and dance to the sad song that told the  
story of the man who Eleanor loved.





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*For Eva & Maceo*



## "A Triumph of Storytelling"

– A Celebrity You Like

Life in Eleanor's town is full of music and celebration. Why does she find herself drawn away to the barren lands to the man who no one loves?



**Phaedra Moon** has always lived with her head in the clouds. She loves folklore, fairy tales, and stories full of secrets. Phaedra lives in Peterborough, Ontario with her family, where she spends her time teaching, writing, singing, and playing music.



**Norville Parchment** is an artist living and working in Portland Oregon. He studied fine art with an emphasis in Oil painting. His work has been featured in several group and solo exhibitions most recently in San Francisco, Ca.

Also by Phaedra Moon:

### Lilibet and the Creature

Lilibet has a simple, happy life. She spends her days reading in her sunny garden and admiring her collection of whimsical treasures, until one day, after a thousand days of sunshine, a raindrop falls, bringing a mysterious stranger to her door.



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