

"Briefly, He Wept"

by
Mike Murphy

112 Lovering Street
Medway, MA 02053-2326
508-533-8310
mikeandzachary@gmail.com
WGAE Registered

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EXT. DESTROYED CITY - DAY

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A hazy sun shines over the remains of a war-destroyed city. Desolation is everywhere: Burnt-out buildings have crumbled to the ground, the husks of cars clog the bomb-buckled streets, and dozens of seared bodies in agonized poses lay all about as they slowly crumble to dust.

A gray-haired and -bearded old man, wearing an ankle-length white robe, puts a sandaled foot down on a fragment of a spent bomb casing. He takes a look at the destruction around him, and a single tear falls from one eye.

A much-younger man appears at his side. He also is wearing a white robe and sandals. He is hovering a few inches above the surface courtesy of small wings flapping quickly on his shoulders.

He speaks to the old man.

GABE

Can I help?

The old man shakes his head sadly.

OLD MAN

Thanks, but no one can.

GABE

Will you give them another chance?

OLD MAN

(beat)

No. They've already had two.

GABE

(surprised)

But this space. . .

OLD MAN

I'll do something with it.

He looks around and sighs.

OLD MAN

I gave them so much. Look what they've done!

GABE

Can you salvage anything?

The old man pulls his robe tighter around him as a hot wind blows through the city's remains.

OLD MAN

Don't think so.

GABE

(longish beat)

You did the best you could. It's not your fault.

OLD MAN

I always had a soft spot for them.

GABE

There's no one alive?

OLD MAN

Not a soul.

(beat)

Maybe I'll just leave it this way. As a warning - an example to everyone else.

GABE

It won't harm anyone?

OLD MAN

Not unless they come down here, and I'll make sure no one does.

GABE

Forever?

OLD MAN

Maybe not that long. I have others to worry about: The bird people of Sanker II, the triple-headed crawlers on Prequa, the mole people of Brasko. I think I'll concentrate on them for a while, make sure nothing like this happens again.

GABE

The mole people? They could never -

OLD MAN

Not now - you're right - but I can't always know how they'll progress.

GABE

(sighs)

I never thought these people could do this.

OLD MAN

They came a long way from the
Garden - not all of it good.

Gabe watches the old man look sadly around for a moment.

GABE

(beat)
Time to go, sir?

The old man swallows hard, distressed.

OLD MAN

Yes.

(beat)
The bird people have started
molting. Before long, they won't
be able to fly.

(beat)
I must have missed something.

FADE TO BLACK.