

Vector Academy Doctrine Projects

Class of 2021-2022

Short Story

Hannah

by Grace Davis

A short story expressing God's attributes of love, sovereignty, and grace by showcasing the Holy Spirit's ability to use doctrine to softly convict and bring clarity to us.

She saw him for only a moment as he weaved between the skinny dull trees of the garden. Pushing through the spindly branches of a dead bush, she called after him, "Hello! Over here!"

His dark silhouette vanished, and she watched as his shadow hurried along the cold ground after him.

"Wait, where are you going?" She stopped, scanning the garden again.

The wind shifted restlessly, bending the trees and rattling the rusted wind chimes above what was meant to be a flourishing flower bed.

All alone, the young girl held tight to the ends of her sleeves, her small frame growing cold.

She worried for the Shadow Man.

"He must not know the way," she whispered, looking back at where she had come. "Someone must tell him-"

A soft rustling sounded, and she turned to find a Mysterious Man approaching her. His very presence startled the young girl; He stood with such confidence, she feared He was the owner of the garden and that He was angry at her for trespassing.

"I was chasing after someone," she replied quickly. "A-a friend."

"I saw," He said, His voice deep and almost familiar to the girl.

"But," He began again, picking up a fallen, rusted tool off the ground. "You call him 'a friend,' yet you do not know him. Haven't your parents taught you not to speak with strangers, young one?"

The girl froze, "No."

He leaned against a small, bare tree, "Yes, I know. You never knew them, either, like your friend who is not your friend and ran away from you."

It was then the girl realized a deeply unsettling thing; the Mysterious Man hadn't a face. Yet, He *did* have a face, she just couldn't discern any distinct features; she knew there had to be eyes, a nose, and a mouth, and so there *were* eyes, a nose, and a mouth. But she hadn't the slightest clue as to how his face came together nor how one could have wrinkles and scars without her physically seeing wrinkles and scars, but they were there. He was like an inverted shadow, a ray of light, but not. He wasn't really there, but He was. She just knew it.

"Are you the owner of this garden?" She asked.

He glanced around, "Not yet."

"Oh," she furrowed her eyebrows. "Then what are you doing here?"

"Waiting."

"For what?"

A smile sparkled His eyes, "Not a what, but a *who*, child."

She blinked, admiring the soft glow of his not-face, "Who, then?"

"Someone unaware of a very important appointment," He winked. "Now tell me, why were you chasing after a shadow?"

"He seemed to have lost his way, sir."

"So you followed him?"

"Yes, I know the way."

The Mysterious Man shifted on His not-feet, "If he is lost, why didn't he turn towards you when you called him?"

"He- well, I worry he couldn't hear me."

The Mysterious Man faced the way the Shadow Man had disappeared.

"Oh but I heard you, young one. And I tell you, he didn't want to go the right way, but rather his own way. You began to follow him."

A blush of guilt blossomed over her cheeks, and the Mysterious Man knelt down beside her.

"What were you really searching for, child?"

But her answer never came as tears welled in her eyes and her shaking hands latched onto her sleeves again.

The Man leaned in close and covered her shoulders with the warmest wool coat, and her shivering stopped. Looking up at His sweet, glowing face, the young girl wished to tell the Man everything, and while words hadn't formed from her mouth, she knew He had heard them.

"Little one, you have been searching for yourself in others in hopes you'd find love, purpose, and understanding. But like your friend who is not your friend, this will lead you astray. You claim you know the way, but you do not, for if you did, you would not be chasing after shadows for things only a Friend can provide. Your search has not been in vain, child; afterall, you have been made to seek the One you are looking for. The One who does know the way and wishes to cover and fill you; a One who is your friend and hasn't run from you. And that One is me."

He stretched out His hands towards her, and she saw His two scars and gasped; they were very real and very there.

Without any hesitation, she traced her fingers along them.

"I do know You," she whispered.

"Yes, and I know you," He smiled. "Will you come with me?"

Nodding, the young girl took His hand and began to walk alongside the Mysterious and Familiar Man, and as they made their way opposite of where the Shadow Man had left, a warm breeze blew over the garden, and in front of a crumbled stone-body of an old drinking well, a bright blue flower began to make its first bloom.