I Think It Was Love

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If it hadn't been for Méline I would never have known what it means to love. She took me into her arms at just two days old, and didn't let me go till I was nine. Then she died, leaving me behind with a heart much too soft in a world I didn't know.
Better if she hadn't done it in the first place. Loving me, I mean. Better if she'd never held me close like that, telling me that I was dearer to her than her real brothers; and that she would never, never, never leave me. She should have told me the truth, but she didn't. She let me believe that everything was beautiful and good and that hardly anyone was like her mother. She should have told me the truth, even if it was only to arm myself against what was to come. For that most of all. I've had blows that made my heart bleed, and little by little I became hardened. The kicks and the lashings that I endured closed the door further and further into my soul. But the memory of Méline always stuck a small invisible foot in between, so that the biting cold or the spicy air of a summer's day could slip through the chink. For this I have cursed her and worshipped her by turns.

On a day in late December of 1746, I was brought to the Morvan, together with about ten other newborns. Foundlings, left behind in the chapel of the Hotel-Dieu on the banks on the Seine in Paris. Or else deposited like a parcel, till later, when things might go better for the parents. It was a later that for most of us would never happen. When the coachman arrived at the house of Annette Marcelot, foster mother, on the edge of the hamlet Pierre-Perthuis, three of the newborns had died. All the rest would die within the year. Only I remained alive.
I lived and kept living. Sometimes though, later on, I wished it had been otherwise. For a long time I wondered if there wasn't some Higher Plan, that I was perhaps intended for great things. But it could just have one of nature's whims, or perhaps some uncalled- for joke of God, although I must admit I've never suspected Him of any sense of humour. Or just once perhaps: at the moment I got my name. Someone took into their stupid head to give me a name that is about as laughable as a cow with a bow in her tail: Dieudonné. I was a gift, for Christ's sake. A gift of God. Some day and I'd be able to laugh.

The air was heavy and grey that first day and it was so cold your voice got trapped in freezing mist. At least, that was how Méline remembered it. 'I couldn't even call out,' she said. 'I opened my mouth and the sound couldn't carry for the cold. I just said, "ah". Then my voice turned into mist and disappeared.'
'And you said "ah" because you saw me, for the first time,' I carried on, for she must have told the story a hundred times, and still I wanted to hear it again. Everything I know about that time comes from Méline.

‘You were tiny and pale,’ she said, ‘much nicer looking than those purply-red little monsters you see sometimes. And you didn’t cry.’
The truth of it was that I was barely alive at that moment, and that’s how I ended up with Méline, for Annette reckoned such a pale, silent child would give little trouble. They brought me inside, spread out a horse blanket in front of the fire and tried to bring me to life.
‘I blew on your hands and feet, rubbing you first vigorously then gently, as best I could’, Méline told me, ‘and mother dropped some milk from her breast between your lips. But you never stirred at all. And then mother said that you were dead.’
But at eight years old Méline was more stubborn that a mule. She picked me up, swaddled me in once more, held me close and rubbed me yet again, vigorously then gently, as best she could She carried me round in circles through the whole house – and those were small circles, of course, because the house was nothing really – rocked me and sang. Until she let out a cry of joy: ‘He’s peeing! Thank God, he’s peeing!”
I did much more than that. I breathed, in short fast gasps, drank a tiny amount of Annette’s milk and filled my whole nappy. That’s how Méline liked to tell it, and then she would blush.
In my nappy she found a card with the number eight on it. A card, from my mother perhaps, something she could recognise me by if she should ever want to find me back.
Nobody knew what the eight meant. I wasn’t born on the eighth, nor in the eighth month. Was I perhaps an eighth child? Méline could go on about it for hours, but that eight never meant much to me. It was as clear as daylight: whoever chose such a simple and senseless sign had no wish to find me back. Anyone, even an illiterate, could draw an eight. And someone who didn’t wish to find me back – well, she wasn’t worth looking for either. Even so, each time Méline urged me always to keep the card with me, and never to lose it. One day I would be glad that I had listened to her, of that she was sure.

Because the name Dieudonné was so long, and because Méline’s younger brothers couldn’t remember it, they called me Leon. I had survived, so I must be as strong as a lion. But however strong I may have been, I cried a great deal and Annette cursed that it was enough to wake the dead. In exchange for the payment she received from Paris, she was willing to keep such a bawler alive, but no more than that. Once when I protested while breastfeeding, she got so angry and threw me so roughly into my cot that I nearly chocked. Luckily Méline was close by; it was she who picked me up and soothed me, who rocked me and took me under her wing, while Annette ranted and raved, ‘The little brat will make my milk dry up! He’s driving me mad with that fussy drinking of his. What will I do without milk? How will we manage without the money?’ And Méline soothed her mother like she soothed me, giving her little pats on the back, and said that everything would be alright. Without her I would never have survived those first years.

There was someone, too, who hated my guts, from the very first day. His name was Gréville. Like me he arrived as a foundling at the Marcelots. Annette had fed him and had carried on feeding him for years, because the foundlings who came afterwards quickly died, one after the other. In order to keep producing milk, Annette fed him until he was well into his seventh year. And then I arrived and pushed him out; there was no milk left for him, certainly once I’d got a taste for it. He whined and hung onto Annette for all he was worth, but she shoved him roughly away and gave me the breast.

Telling it like this I almost feel pity for him, but when I think about all that happened later I can feel only loathing at the mention of his name. I remember nothing of him, of how he was at that time. I was far too small. From Méline I knew that he was supposed to help her father, Henri, with chopping wood, but that he didn’t stick it out for long and ran off. Where he went no-one knew. He wasn’t missed at all and Henri did what he always did, kept quiet and resigned himself to what he always considered as the inevitable. He was good at keeping quiet, better than any other. So good, he almost became invisible. I have but very few memories of him, but those I have stand out like grains of sand in a raindrop.

Gréville was quite different from me, Méline used to say. She had never been able to love him. He was stiff and resistant as a baby, while I yielded, warm and willing, to the contours of her body. A surly child who never laughed and asked no questions, as if he already knew everything he needed, while I possessed an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and never tired of Méline's stories, even if it was only gossip. A distant, ugly child with large protruding eyes, a sharp, mouse-like face with a receding chin that merged in a single curve into his neck. A child who became yet more distant and ugly because no-one ever took the trouble, in spite of his reluctance, to show him any affection, so that he might have unbent just a little. No-one took the trouble to penetrate his hard shell, as if they were all afraid that what lay within was just another layer of shell or – perhaps even worse – only emptiness.

Unlike Gréville, I was not ugly. Not exactly a cherub – just as well, since I've never understood what makes people admire children who look more like pigs than humans – but I've got eyes that catch people's gaze every time. I'm not making that up. Méline always said the same, as have many after her.

'You've got gypsy's eyes,' Méline once said, 'very dark and a bit dangerous.' And then she put her head on one side and screwed up her eyes into little splits, as if she was thinking very deeply. 'I could fall wildly in love with you,' she added, and I turned dizzy as she said it, although I was still just a child. 'But of course I'd never do that, because you're so much younger than me. You're just my favourite brother and that's much better.'

The disappointment drained the blood from my head so fast it almost hurt. I didn't agree with her, I didn't agree with her at all. I wanted to be so much more for her than her favourite brother, although Gréville hadn't even had that bit of luck. Gréville, who differed from me so greatly; Gréville, who, in spite of such differences, shared with me something so important. We were more than partners in misfortune; we were survivors.

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The house we lived in seemed more like a hut than a house. All the children slept in the living room, which also served as kitchen and workshop. Annette and Henri had a separate bedroom, although this was more like a cupboard, with room just for a bed. Why they slept separately I didn't know, because Henri's snores sounded just as loud through the slits in the wood as if he'd slept with us. And sometimes we heard Annette call out as if afraid, little cries that began almost like whispers and gradually got louder, but luckily that never lasted long.

'Shouldn't you help her?' I asked Méline one night. I lay, as usual, warm and close, my head nestled in her armpit.

Méline laughed softly.

'I mean it, really', I whispered. 'she's having a bad dream and I hate it when she screams out like that.'

Méline fell silent and patted me softly on the back. Then, 'She doesn't need any help, Leon, really she doesn't.'

'But what's the matter?'

'They're just having a good time together, as only a man and a woman can.'

I was quiet for a moment and turned my head a little towards her, which made my nose prickle in her armpit. Her sour, animal smell took away my breath and I coughed. She gave a stifled giggle.

'Watch out, you're tickling me.'

'No, you're tickling me', I answered, for her armpits were no longer those of a child and the hairs made my nose itch.

'And I don't believe they're having a good time at all. I never see them talking or laughing

together.'
Méline sighed. The fire still glowed and in the faint, reddish light I saw how her nostrils opened wide and her mouth clamped shut.
'Haven't you ever seen the boar climb onto the sow?' she asked. 'Or Duke onto Victor's bitch?'
Duke was our dog and, in fact, I had seen him do strange things with our neighbour's dog on the other side of the river. It looked as though he wanted to jump up onto her back but got stuck half way and was thrusting her forwards with his rump. He'd done that to my leg once, too. I nodded and Méline pressed my head so hard between her arm and her breast, that I was winded: 'You're tickling me again.'
Just then Annette caught her breath then uttered a sigh of relief.
'Is that what they're doing?' I asked, gasping for air, and tried my best not to imagine Annette on hands and knees with Henri thrusting her forwards, but the image stubbornly refused to go away. The harder I tried to banish it, the more it persisted.
'Ugh,' I said, shuddering, and shook my head, 'and you said they enjoyed it, as only a man and a woman can, but they do the same as dogs and pigs.'
Méline snorted and poked me in the side. 'And even so, they still enjoy it.'
'You're lying.'
'I never lie to you'. With this she ended the discussion, and I no longer contradicted her, because she was right. I'd never caught her telling a lie. Not to me. Not yet.

If it had been up to Annette, I would soon have left. After me there were six more foundlings. Two survived and that was better than the Marcelots had ever done. To make matters worse Annette had yet another child of her own. From that moment onwards I was no more than one mouth too many to feed.

'Leon must go,' she said one evening.
She thought I was already asleep, but I was wide awake. I was lying with my back to her and kept my eyes tightly shut. My heart thundered and I tried to still my galloping breath. The fire scorched my back and for once I was glad Méline wasn't lying beside me. There was a lot of mending to do and she was sitting next to Annette with a pile of large trousers, and small ones too, between them.
'Leon's staying', her voice was flat and stubborn.
A sharp slap followed, flesh against flesh. I presumed that Annette had dealt her a box around the ears. It stayed quiet for a long while, with only the crackling of the fire and the soft tearing sound of thick thread being pulled through sackcloth. Henri was in the stall with the sow, which was to drop her litter. I'd asked him earlier on in the day if I could stay and watch, but he thought it would last too long and had sent me to bed.
'He won't die, that's for sure', said Annette. And then, more softly: 'He'll survive, just like I did.'
Méline didn't answer, but I could sense her surprise.
'He's already stayed too long.' That was Annette again. 'And he eats too much. It's time he went to Auxerre or Paris and learnt a trade.
'You never told me', replied Méline, and I knew it wasn't Paris or Auxerre she was talking about.
'I'm not a blabbermouth like you.'
'But something like that.'
'It's the same story for so many of us in the Morvan. And it's a very short one: there was once a foundling, who got a wet nurse, survived, grew up and went out into the world. That's how it was for me; that's how it'll be for him. And that's all there is to it.'
I couldn't keep my eyes shut any longer. I stared aghast at the wall of our hut and didn't know what shocked me most: that I shared my fate with Annette or that she wanted to get rid of me, while she knew how tough that was. I didn't know whether I found her wicked or just mad. I didn't understand her at all.

'He can work on the land or help father with chopping wood,' said Méline after a short silence.
Annette laughed scornfully. 'Just like Gréville, yes. And how long do you think he'll keep that up? He's too young and too skinny to work on the land.

‘He can help me’, said Méline.
‘He’s at that useless age: too old for the breast and too young for real work.’
‘Annette had raised her voice. I groaned and moved a little.
‘So he can’t learn a trade either’, whispered Méline. ‘He can help me with the animals. He can gather wood, go to the market in Vézelay and sell eggs. He can come with me when I go to the castle to do the washing.’
‘He costs more than he brings in’, Annette interrupted her.
‘He’s staying, said Méline shortly.
Flesh on flesh again, but the sound was different from the time before. I turned over as quietly as I could and saw how Méline held her mother’s wrist in check. ‘Hit me as much as you like,’ she said, her voice low, ‘but Leon’s staying here.’
As I’ve already said, she was more stubborn than a mule.
Annette jerked her arm free and in doing so overturned the sowing basket. Two infants began to cry. The foundling with a high-pitched wail and a trilling sound in his voice, which always made me laugh, Annette’s own child flat and shrill. Annette swore under her breath and picked up the shrill one from its cot, then undid the buttons down her front. Méline tried to soothe the child with the trill in its throat and looked over at me stealthily. She winked at me conspiratorially, but didn’t smile. I resolutely shut both my eyes tight in an attempt to look conspiratorial too, but didn’t make such a good job of it. For to be honest, I was not reassured.

They didn’t talk about me any more after that, at least not when I could overhear. Maybe Méline had got her way; maybe Annette was waiting for a new opportunity to get rid of me.
I tried to put the whole thing out of my mind and to show that I was prepared to work hard. I went with Henri to chop wood, helped him saw the blocks to the correct length. I held them steady for him, while he incised them at both ends with the mark of his boss, so they could be thrown into the River Cure. Some kilometres further on it flowed out into the River Yonne, where the loggers were waiting to gather the wood and to stack it into huge piles. Later on the logs would be stacked again and skilfully bound together, after which they would drift in endless rows up-river to Paris. At night I would sometimes see in my mind’s eye the great timber trains, but I’d never actually seen the real thing. One day I would go to Auxerre, and from there as far as Paris. When I was old enough I’d travel with the loggers, together with Méline. I’d show her that I could be more than her favourite brother.
How was I to know that women were barred from the timber trains? How could I know my dreams would never come true? And that Méline had dreams of her own too, but of something quite different.

3

In the warm days of August, when the countryside changed from brilliant green to a darker hue, all of us children went blackberry picking. They would grow in profusion on the edge of the forest and we would stuff ourselves with them until our stomachs were bursting and we laughed at each other’s purple-stained faces. Only when we couldn’t swallow another mouthful did we fill the basket Annette had given us. I would grasp my stomach in both hands to feel how hard it was and loved to watch Méline’s outrage at my burps. A little one to start off with, just a modest belch. Then a bit louder, and finally I braced myself for a whopper that they must have heard in the next village. The louder I burped, the louder she would shriek at me ‘No, Leon!’ But because she couldn’t stop laughing too, I just felt she was egging me on.
After the blackberries came the apples. We always had to move fast to get the windfalls that fell from the wall of Gerbeau’s farm because the Huet boys, who lived a bit further up, had their eyes

on them as well. Then we'd move on to the hazelnuts, which were ready at almost the same time. These were times of abundance. An abundance that arrived just at the right moment, because in summertime there was no wood chopping and therefore no income for the family. Henri had to wait for harvest time, when, with a bit of luck, he'd be able to help in the fields at Gerbeau's. Henri always seemed to be afraid of coming to a halt, of having nothing to do. I didn't understand that at the time. Only much later, when I had nothing else to occupy myself with except to keep walking until it got dark, did I discover that doing nothing lets you think and dream, of memories and longings, but also of doubts and fears. Only talking is able sometimes to still the world within, but that never worked for Henri. So to get by he would keep busy with the animals and doing small jobs in and around the house, jobs that we children would usually do, which gave us more time to do as we wished.

What I liked best of all was to visit the drilled-through rock on the bank of the Cure, especially on rainy days. Then we'd all sit close together in the natural alcove, next to the large hole, and watch how everything around us became soaking wet, while we stayed dry. After a few minutes everything smelled different too, even our clothes and our hair, and I loved that. There we sat, and talked. Or rather: Méline talked, her brothers played and I asked all the questions. I wanted to know what Paris looked like, and she told me about houses like palaces and beautiful people who ate only meat, so rich were they all. And the women, they put on perfume which was water that smelt just like blossom, but much stronger. And they wore their hair done up as high as towers, look: she took off her cap, opened wide a cleft sprig and stuck it firmly onto her head. Then she pulled loose a few locks of dark blond hair and wound them around some of the twigs. Then, with her hands on her hips, and looking highly pleased, she turned her head to all sides, while the rest of us held our stomachs with laughter. Then she got cross and tried to pull the sprig out of her hair but couldn't, so – to her great vexation – she had to ask for help. She looked so cross that at first we laughed even louder, with that by now collapsed and lopsided contraption wobbling about on top of her head. But then I really felt for her. Carefully I loosened her hair, threw away the sprig and stroked her head down gently to get the bits of bark out of her hair. Then I gave her her cap, which she quickly arranged back on her head.
'Of course, in Paris they don't use tree sprigs', she said, regaining her composure.
I didn't ask her what they did use, because I couldn't have cared less about the towers on top of those Parisian ladies heads. There was something else I wanted to know about. There was something I wanted to know, even though it didn't really interest me. So I made my voice sound as lukewarm as I could.
'If people there were so rich, why didn't my parents keep me?'
She looked away from me, and squeezed her eyes into half moons. 'I think I know', she said then, 'I think that your mother was very, very young, and wasn't married.'
I must have looked extremely alarmed, because she quickly laid her hand on my arm. 'No, no, there was nothing she could do about it, of course! There will have been some very bad man. A handsome, wicked man, who promised they would marry, then abandoned her. How could she have taken care of you? Nobody would have wanted her any more. Her own father would have turned her away! Without any money, without a home, where could she go? What could she do?
The rims of her nostrils turned red and her eyes moistened, so carried away was she by her story. I almost forgot to breathe and a fly flew into my mouth. I spat it out, rubbed my mouth for a moment and continued to listen, my lips compressed. Then she stopped with her telling and considered me, a calculating look in her eye.
'That's why the card with the figure eight on it so important', she said solemnly. 'One day your mother will want to find you, and without that card she'll never believe that you are her son.
It had stopped raining. I gathered a few pebbles together and flung them as hard as I could against the rock wall. 'I couldn't care less, anyhow.'
'Then why do you want to know what happened?' asked Méline.
'I don't want to know', I cried out loudly, because I was afraid that my voice would turn into a whine if I spoke too softly. And to avoid any more of her questions, I walked off and leapt spitefully onto Paul's back, one of the brothers. He was a good head taller than I, but not as strong. He swung

round and gave me a couple of well-directed punches in the stomach, to which I responded with a knee jerk between his legs. He gave a loud wail and bit me in the arm. Tears sprung to my eyes, but I wasn't going to cry.
'Girlie!' I shouted.
'Foundling!' he snapped back.
'Hey there!' shouted Méline. 'If you two don't stop then we're going home straightaway!'
We let go of one another and I felt sad rather than angry. Paul still lay on the ground, doubled up with his hands between his thighs. I stuck out a hand to help him up, but he ignored me.
'You say sorry, Leon', said Méline. 'You started.'
'You're not a girlie', I said to Paul grudgingly.
He got up slowly, sniffed loudly and wiped under his nose with the back of his hand. A long streak of snot reached from his nose right to his ear. He looked and me and said, 'But you're still a foundling.'
While we walked home, Méline threw her arm round me and pulled me close. 'You're not a foundling', she said. 'They didn't just find you on the street. You were specially delivered, together with a card. That's much better.'
'I told you already that I couldn't care less', I muttered.
'I don't believe that, Leon. I really don't.'
It irritated me that she was right, or at any rate just a little bit, and I remained stubbornly silent.
'But maybe I'm wrong', she added. 'Perhaps you'd rather I said nothing any more about that time, about Paris and the people living there.'
'Yes, I would', I blurted out much too quickly.
She smiled and squeezed my shoulder.
'About Paris, I mean.'

I've no idea where Méline got her stories from. Sometimes she'd chat with market vendors in Vézelay or with travelling sellers, although she knew Annette didn't like her to. And she loved the pictures of richly clad women that you sometimes used to see in the shop windows of the dressmaker in the rue Saint-Etienne.
Nor do I know whether I believed everything she told me. But somehow that didn't matter. She had a gift of telling stories and that made my world just that bit larger.

I liked pictures too, just like she did, but pictures belonged to everyone and gave up all their secrets straightaway. It was the letters that fascinated me, even though I didn't understand them. Or perhaps it was because I didn't understand them. Behind each word that I couldn't read I imagined a whole world.
There weren't many letters in my life. It was like looking for rare flowers. Sometimes I'd slide my fingers over the chiselled letters on the gravestones next to the church, as if I hoped that their meaning would find its way through my finger tops all the way to my head. When we went to mass in the village, I would do my utmost see the bible, but the broad back of the priest got three times as large each time he spread his arms, and we stood at the back anyway, so only now and then did I see the contours of the book. Everything in it remained a secret, for the priest read it out in a language none of us understood. While his monotonous voice mumbled on and rose echoing up to God, I'd look up at the vaulted ceiling of the church and wonder if God would hear him down here. They said that God saw and heard all. He even knew Latin. First learn how to read, then Latin perhaps. Now and again I'd shut my eyes tightly because it made me dizzy to think of all the work that still awaited me. Don't ask me why, but I was convinced from the very beginning: one day I'd be able to read, and that secret world of the letters would be mine.

There was a small school in Vézelay, but none of us went to it. Henri taught me how to measure and a little bit of arithmetic, just enough to be able to help him with the wood. We didn't need to learn how to read and write, and going to school would mean time off work. Every time I went to Vézelay I peeped in through the windows of the school and saw the class with its benches and the backs of the children's heads, and felt a burning jealousy. There were farmers' sons in there as well,

and one of them I knew for sure was so stupid he couldn't tell the back end of a cow from the front – and even a few girls.
One time, it was hot and the window stood open, I tried to follow the lesson. The master, a priest, pointed with his stick to a row of letters on the board in front and with his free hand directed the class to recite a's and e's and o's and i's and u's and I joined in, wild with enthusiasm. Till the master saw me. He walked towards me with short, quick steps and a smile on his face. My breath and my heart started to race together. Now all would be well. He'd see that I really wanted to learn, that I was clever, a breath of fresh air compared to the clodhoppers with the wits of a chicken. He'd lay his hand on my shoulder, full of admiration and say: 'Come here, my boy, I can see that you're made for letters.' I looked up at him, full of expectation. Then he shook his head, gave me a shove in the chest, which almost made me lose my balance, and shut the window before my very nose. A couple of the older boys in the class turned round and laughed and one of them squinted at me and pulled a face. I stuck out my tongue and made the ugliest grimace I knew, but that just made them laugh all the louder. Then I shrugged my shoulders and walked away. After all, I'd learnt five letters and these I would never forget.

Looking for a cool spot on warm days, we'd cross the Vauban Bridge where the water flowed downriver from Bazoches and into the Cure, turning it a muddy brown. Méline said that the brown came from the sand on the riverbed, but I was absolutely sure that it was crap from those people living up in the Castle of Bazoches. Everyone spoke of the rich scumbags living up there; that said enough.
We'd walk into the wood and follow the path to the watermill. In summer it was always gloomy, with a thick canopy of oak and beach. I never liked going there much. It was dank and oppressive, and the muggy air made me want to choke. For a reason that quickly became clear, Méline would linger. She'd lag behind, pull her cap straight, begin to limp or would suddenly get tired and say she wanted to sit down and rest awhile on a rock – no, not this one, but the one a bit further up, near the mill. Then she would sit down, her face immobile and her gaze fixed upon the river; her eyes, though, would shoot sideways quick as a flash at any sound coming from the mill.
It all began when she saw the new miller for the first time. He came from a village by the sea, more than fifty Burgundian miles away to the west of Vézelay – that was a good six days journey – and ended up as helper to the old miller, who had no sons of his own and was old and sick. So when Gavin, a young drifter, arrived at his mill he took him in. When the old miller died shortly afterwards Gavin was the only person who knew how to work the mill, so he automatically became the new miller.
One day I slipped on the muddy path through the wood, and hurt my ankle. He must have heard me cry out, for he came running towards us almost immediately to offer his help.
'There's no need,' I waved him away, 'I can manage.'
I was very quick with my reply, too quick, because actually I could have done with some help. But I'd seen the look in Méline's eyes and that frightened me. The way she looked at Gavin, she'd never looked at anyone like that before. Enchanted, as if she'd seen a ghost. Frightened almost. But then she laid her hand on my arm and said, without taking her eyes off him, 'That's very kind of Monsieur, Leon. Let us accept his offer gratefully.'
He lifted me up, which I found humiliating in front of Méline, and brought me to the miller's house. He took off my boot and felt my ankle, which was swelling painfully. All this time Méline continued to stare at him with those strange great eyes of hers. Suddenly I wondered if she was actually really afraid. Then he looked at her and gave a quick smile, whereupon her eyes fluttered and she looked away, while a crooked kind of smile spread across her face. I didn't like it at all. Again I felt afraid, but this time it was fear of another kind. That I would lose her to the drifter. And a drifter with light grey eyes. While it was my gypsy eyes she so loved.