

Message in a Bottle

by Cerrid Wynn

The truth had always been unsafe. The very people who advised her to lie and not to tell under penalty of great harm, were the very people who would yell at and punish Ginger when she lied to them. It was incredibly confusing to a 6 year old. She eventually learned everyone had their own truth, and some of them were not true at all.

Ginger was not an attractive girl, always too tall for her age, skinny and gangly, thin... always too thin. People thought she was malnourished. Even when she went to a home where they fed her well she was thin. Her nose was a little too large, and she had an odd shade of blondish hair. No one really knew what color to call it. Her truth was she was someone else, someone beautiful, someone important, who could sing and talk to animals... a princess everyone loved. She lived her truth when she could escape her nightmares.

She knew though, her nightmares were the real truth. The taunts of being called ugly by other children. The way her family skirted around why she had a different last name, and would often blame her first when something bad was done. She didn't care if she was the one who had done it, it hurt that hers was the first name screamed out in anger and frustration. Her nightmares came at night and during the day, in pain she couldn't describe, visited on her by the people she knew were supposed to protect her. Her truth was she had loving parents who adored her. Her nightmares... well those were someone else.

Ginger began to find her nightmares overwhelming, but no one believed them. Everyone thought she was a liar, making things up for attention. So she made up a language, a code, and began to send out messages, like a spy. Messages in a bottle from a castaway on a faraway island she would set adrift in the seas of nightmares, somehow hoping someone would read them and recognize the truth in them. She hoped someone would come to her aid. While she waited she closed her eyes until the nightmare passed, and she could resume living her truth.

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Those messages saved her life over and over again. Coded communications sent out in hopes they would find someone who understood them. She went from one nightmare to another, and wrote her messages and kept them safely stowed away until someone needed to see them. Those messages brought about two criminal convictions.

Those messages went out on a blog for 10 years as she became an adult, and traded one nightmare for another that looked less scary, but was no less a nightmare. Those messages helped her get out, with the children she'd brought into it.

Ginger's messages had become an important part of her life. They were a part of who she was. Now that her truth was becoming her dream, she wondered if she still had messages to slip into glass bottles and toss upon the waves. They wouldn't need to be coded anymore, and they wouldn't be sent out in hopes of rescue or escape. They would finally be messages simply saying, "I'm o.k. I'm Just living the dream over here, and that is the truth."

