

Lost

by Epiphany Ferrell

He hates when she loses things, hates it! She can be so careless. He loves her, so he hunts around until he finds it for her, and then they share a laugh.

He thought about her purposely blank face and the slight, dismissive lift of her shoulders when she told him this time about what she'd lost. The memory infuriated him. Didn't she know how important it was to him?

He'd find it. It couldn't really be lost. Things were never really lost. He'd just have to dig around until he came across it. And he would. Surely he would.

Her voice hadn't sounded like her at all. She hadn't even sat down, just stood there in the short foyer, swinging her purse against her knees.

She'd said, "I don't love you any more."

"What?" he'd said. "What do you mean?"

"I mean I just don't love you anymore."

"But what's wrong?"

"Nothing is wrong."

"What have I done?" How could she say 'nothing is wrong' when she was saying she no longer loved him?

"Nothing. I don't know why. My love, it's gone."

"Your love for me is gone? Just gone?"

"I'm sorry."

"What, gone, like you lost it? Like you misplaced it?"

That shrug, that flat expression.

"Don't make this so hard."

"So you've lost your love for me."

Silence, but heavy with repressed sound.

"I'll find it. I always find things you lose. Remember when your cell phone was in the freezer?"

"Not this time."

"Let me try."

"It's lost. Lost and gone. Forever. My love for you. I'm sorry."

His voice had been thick with grief, trembling with anger. Hers had been toneless. He'd torn open his shirt, to show her his heart beating inside his chest. It hadn't mattered.

Lost her love. Just lost it, like you'd lose a sock at the laundro-mat.

He'd find it. It was here, somewhere, by God. Maybe under this... thing. Or in it? What was it, anyway. Her spleen, maybe?

Her heart had been easy to identify, though it wasn't stone or ice as he'd supposed it would be. If it hadn't been broken before, it was now.

He found it hard to believe this smelly filth had anything to do with his pretty girlfriend. She was so much prettier when all this was inside, not outside and making a mess of his living room. She'd kept all this ugliness from him. It was dishonest of her, really.

He sighed. He'd always before found things she lost. Keys. Left shoes. Earrings.

But this time she was right.

If her love was here, he couldn't find it. It really was lost. Maybe if he looked just a little bit longer.

