

WHEN DARKNESS FINDS ITS LIGHT

I.

The ball

It was a spring evening in Paris, it was the year 1905 when a young and light lady was preparing to enter the hall of his first ball in season.

She was excited, and a little bit scared but a big smile illuminated her small face that crowned the long white dress she was wearing, an elegant gown encrusted with crystals on the skirt, made more voluminous by the corset. A big diamond necklace shone like a star on her slim neck.

Her name was Lorelie.

She entered a big hall, with a lot of other young women and gentlemen, who were talking, laughing and a small group of people were dancing.

Lorelie looked around and immediately noticed the shining crystal chandeliers, illuminating the hall. What a splendid place it was! The ceiling was painted with beautiful frescoes.

"Wonderful! Wonderful!" said the lady's mother, and she turned around. Gold was the dominant colour. The luxury that she loved so much seemed like a dream to her.

Lorelie meanwhile was walking around the room looking for refreshment, when her eyes fell on one of the sequential windows. She ran her hands over the long silk curtains, opened the window, and went out, alone and in peace admiring the night sky and the countryside surrounding Paris. She went back into the room, the sound of her heels echoing on the marble, and sat down on one of the red sofas beside the walls, waiting for something to happen. She didn't know what she was waiting for.

Whenever she opened her eyes she saw groups of young women talking and fearless about dancing, others smiling at their future husbands. The classical music resounded in the lady's ears, hinting at harmonious movements.

She turned around and saw his mum.

Her mum was a young and strict woman. She wasn't tall, she had a small nose and her eyes were light brown like poured gold.

Lucille was a strict but thoughtful woman, she looked way more excited than her daughter. Lorelie lived in a big house with 6 brothers, she was the only girl, so this is the first ball of her fair mother.

"Lorelie, I want you to meet Monsieur Enric Lefreve. He's a noble gentleman".

Her mother's voice snapped her out of her thoughts.

"He's from Montivillers?" she asked. Her mood was a mixture of curiosity and anxiety. "Good evening Madam," said Enric. The young lady gasped. Her gaze was full of interest. "Good evening, it's a pleasure to meet you" said Lorelie.

Enric was a tall and muscular boy. His eyes were as blue as a sapphire. He was older than Lorelie, much older. Despite this, something about him struck her.

"May I have this dance?" he asked in a firm voice.

Lorelie wasn't sure about her answer: "Why does a boy like him want to dance with me?" Her mum watched her with hard and severe eyes.

"Absolutely! Will you accept, my dear?"

Lorelie nodded, smiling.

He went closer, took her hand and led her to the dance floor.

Lorelie was terrified. She had never danced with a boy before.

The young couple followed the sweet notes of music without saying a word. The music stopped.

"Thank you Lorelie, I hope to see you soon again."

Then he gave her a shy bow and left.

Lorelie turned to her mum. "Mother, he is not the man for me!"

"Oh dear" she said in a disappointed voice. She took her by the dress and hugged her. "You just have to know him better, don't you think? He looks sweet, beautiful and... rich" said the woman

kindly. With her hands she fixed the bodice of her dress, she smiled, turned and went away. Lorelie sat back on the same chair that had kept her company before Enric's arrival. She didn't feel comfortable in that place, she would have liked to disappear in the ground and reappear in her bed, but there was something that had struck her.

"You don't seem like the other women - the way you speak impresses me"

"Some women are cultivated too, you know?"

Lorelie was thinking about this conversation they had while dancing.

The evening was over, Lorelie and her mother went home in the carriage.

"I invited Enric to our home, tomorrow he'll be with us at lunch."

She held back his anger and didn't speak to his mother throughout the journey.

II.

Different opinions

The morning arrived, the ladies of the house were all awake.

Lorelie's father, an educated but also humble man, was waiting to get to know the man who he had only met for a second at the ball.

Lorelie loved her father, she learnt from him something new every day. He used to always find something interesting in reality. Furthermore, he wasn't as obsessed with marriage as her mother. Lorelie was thinking how the lunch would be and if she would make a good impression on him.

When Enric arrived, her father welcomed him warmly. "Welcome dear Eric! I've heard about you."

"Hopefully you heard only positive comments about me" replied the young man, smiling.

The conversation at lunch was mainly led by Lorelie's mother, Rose.

Enric was attentive to the details and delicate in his manner: this impressed Lorelie.

At the end of the meal, they greeted each other warmly and Lorelie didn't want to believe that her mother might be right.

She was thoughtful and quite immediately after lunch, she went up to her room. His father followed her after a while.

"Lorelie, you look worried, what happened?"

"Well, I am a bit worried about Enric, mum wants me to marry him, but I'm not sure about him"

"That's understandable, but he looks friendly and, more importantly, he seems to be a kind gentleman. But it doesn't matter what I think, how do you feel about him?"

"I don't know, he seems nice but I don't know him well yet."

"Well, I think you should go all the way with him. Let's see what happens." Her father was a wise and smart man, and was always able to find the sunny side of things. Lorelie felt relieved and not scared anymore.

III

A new life

The bells were ringing that day. The big cathedral was decorated with a white roses and the aisle was divided between Lorelie's guests and Enric's. Lorelie was happy and emotional, a question dominated her mind...a question that made her think.

The aisle on Lorelie's side was full of excited people whispering and laughing. On Enric's side there was a small group of people talking and looking around, when Enric saw somebody. The mysterious man smiled and waved at him. He was thin and tall and had brown protruding eyes.

The groom wasn't happy to see him, indeed he was visibly upset. Luckily their gazes encounter each other after the ceremony. Lorelie noticed her husband's reaction.

"What's wrong?"

"Nothing, darling," he answered, trying to hide his concern.

The wedding was elegant but simple at the same time. "I'm so happy for us," said Lorelie with a big smile on her face

Enric watched her with a look full of joy and love. They were a beautiful couple, an example for the society of the time.

Enric worked for a big textile company. He was a rich nobleman appreciated by everyone in town. The couple lived in a lovely house but her mother was always there with them.

"So darling, how is it going with Enric? Are you being a good wife?" asked Rose, smiling.

"Yes mum, everything's fine, but why are you here?...Again"

Answered Lorelie with a bored voice: "Well, I just wanted to give you some tips, I thought you could need them"

The girl sighed and said, trying to be patient: "Mum, I know you want to help me, but I want to live my own life...by myself. And face reality by myself. Then, I'm not alone. I have my husband."

"Oh, it's fine, I get it, I will step apart if you want to." Lorelie managed to stop her mother's intrusiveness and this made her feel freer and happier.

IV.

Parallel lives

One day, after a hard working day Enric was going home when he saw a person he knew very well. It was the same man whose view had upset him on his wedding day.

Jack was here in front of him sitting on a bench.

He was smoking a cigarette.

"How are you my friend?" he asked with a shady smile.

"Hi Jack, I'm fine, thank you for asking. Why are you here?"

"I'm here for business. I have to meet a friend for business. It was a pleasure to meet you." Then he got up and he left Enric lonely. "He couldn't be there by chance" thought Erin walking home. He had the impression Jack had followed him.

He started thinking about Jack.

They had met each other twenty-two years before, when Jack had become his new neighbour. They used to play together and spend time near the port, their favourite place, until Jack started hanging out with nasty boys and being involved in disreputable businesses.

Enric decided to drift apart from him. But one day he needed him again.

Memories crowded his mind. He remembered about a conversation he had with his wife when they had just started dating.

Enric, I have got a question," she said one evening, while they were strolling along the Seine. They had known each other for a month and she couldn't help but ask him something she cared about.

"Alright, I'm listening."

"Well, I told you everything about my family, but I know nothing about yours. Where are your parents? Do you have any brothers or sisters? How was your childhood? This is important for me before we take any steps."

Enric breathed heavily, hesitating for a moment: "You're right, - he replied - you deserve to know about my family, but there isn't much to say. I lived with my parents for 8 years, until they died in a fire. I don't remember much about that day, we were all sleeping until my mum started screaming because of the fire. It's a miracle I survived. But sometimes, I wish I didn't, just to be with them. After they passed away I lived with my aunt until I was old enough to buy my own house and make a life, that's all."

He remembered how shocked she was, although she tried to hide his reaction. She surely wasn't expecting this. After hearing his words, she hugged him, with kindness and compassion. Someone

knocking on the door made Lorelie return back to reality. "Oh, Enric must have arrived," Lorelie thought, while going to open the door.

V.

Dust off the past

The teapot was whistling on the fire. Lorelie poured some tea in Enric's pot. Suddenly, she heard someone knocking on the door. She left the teapot on the table and told Enric that she would be back in a minute. She opened the door and saw a tall man, with a letter holder uniform. Lorelie took all the letters and went inside. While she was watching some of the letters she walked again to the living room.

"Journal de l'Empire, Journal des debates politiques et litteraires"

Read Lorelie with a lazy voice. "Wait, there's another letter, we haven't received one in a long time. Strange, I don't recognise the rubber stamp, do you?" asked Lorelie

"Let me see it, honey." Enric turned his head to watch the letter, when he saw it he widened his eyes and said, with a flebil and worried voice:

"Lorelie, what day is it?" he asked still looking at the letter

"Ehm, it's Wednesday, why are you asking?"

"Nothing darling, can you give me that letter, please?" said Enric trying to keep his voice calm.

"Why? What's wrong, Enric? I can read it for you if you want"

"No, you don't need to, I will read it by myself" said Enric with an anxious voice, stretching his arm to take the letter.

"Mhh, i don't think i will give it to you, darling" Said Lorelie hinting a smile. The girl started running all over the room with a loud laugh.

But Enric wasn't happy at all. He got up off the chair and breathed heavily.

"Come on darling, give that letter and stop being so childish"

Lorelie stopped running and the smile on her face disappeared.

The girl walked calm to the desk, took a paper knife and cut the rubber stamp while watching Enric with a provocative gaze.

"Wait Lorelie, don't read it, it's an order!"

"Are you giving me orders? You know there shouldn't be secrets between us" Lorelie stared at him uncertainly and watched the letter with curiosity. She couldn't resist, and she didn't want to obey her husband without knowing the reason, so she started reading the letter.

-Dear Enric

I'm your aunt, Margaret.-

Lorelie was incredulous, but she decided to keep reading.

-I know I'm supposed to write only on Friday, but I've got some important news.-

Lorelie was more curious and worried every second that passed.

-I know you don't care about him-

Lorelie's mind was a tornado of thoughts and questions:

"Who is this woman talking about? What is my husband hiding from me?"

-He is very ill, you must go to see him and talk with him before he dies, your father is important, if you don't do something now, you will regret it-

Lorelie's face became pale in a second, she felt like she was about to faint. Anger and disappointment invaded her mind and they grew stronger while she was watching the man who had hidden the truth of his past from her. She remained impassive. Her gaze was cold and expressionless : "Now you can read the letter" Lorelie left the paper on the sofa and walked to her room.

Enric watched Lorelie while she was leaving and he started to worry about the content of the letter. He took it and read it.

After he finished, he realised that he had always felt as if something overwhelming was about to happen, and that moment had arrived. Enric had always thought that he didn't care about his father anymore, that he was too angry with him to even be worried about his health, but a tear falling on his cheek proved him wrong.

VI. Regret

He started to think about Lorelie. He overreacted to his wife, but he was wrong. He could understand Lorelie's anger and he had to do something about it.

He went upstairs and knocked on Lorelie's door. A bitter voice said he could get in.

Lorelie was curled up on the bed. Enric sat on the edge of the bed and murmured: "I'm sorry."

Lorelie raised her gaze and a feeble smile appeared on her face. Enric was polite, but he never said sorry and the young lady wasn't expecting this.

"I know I should have told you about my father, but it is difficult for me to talk about it. He means nothing to me, it was easier to pretend he was dead."

"What? Is it the truth?"

"I won't hide anything from you starting from now. You deserve to know the truth as this is it." He lowered his head.

"My mother died after she gave birth to me, so I lived with my father for eight years. But he's always been a coward and abandoned me with my aunt. He left me here in France because I reminded him of my mother. My aunt took care of me until I was fifteen, then I started working and I bought my own house."

Lorelie caressed Enric's face and stared at him with compassion. She knew that Enric was reserved but she was kind and she also knew that they had to support each other.

"You made a mistake because you lied to me, but nobody is perfect and I forgive you. I know you must be very angry with your father, but I think you should go to him, as your aunt said."

Enric stiffened and started to think about what Lorelie had just told him. He was confused.

"Maybe Lorelie and Maragret are right, - he thought to himself - maybe I should go to my father, but he hurt me so much, and he ruined my youth, and that is not all. If I leave, my wife would certainly come with me, and she could find out other things hidden behind my past".

He took a deep breath and answered Lorelie: "Darling, first of all, I must thank you for forgiving me. I really hate my father, but maybe you're right, I need some time to think about this."

Lorelie smiled kindly and replied: "Of course, let me know your decision as soon as you can, and just know that I'll be on your side no matter what."

Enric got off the bed and headed to the living room. The tea was still in his cup, it was probably cold by now, but the drink was the last of Enric's thoughts. He walked to a cupboard and looked at a little picture covered in dust. It was a picture of the house where he lived as a child. The only thing about him that hadn't changed in time was his hair. It was still as wavy as the stormy sea. He didn't remember much of that house, but his clearest memory was of him running in the garden, playing hide and seek with his father: this was one of the few happy moments he lived with him.

About two days went by and Enric had finally decided what to do.

One evening, while he was having dinner with Lorelie, he said: "I think I made a decision about my father."

The girl laid down her spoon and said: "Okay darling, I'm listening"

"You know, I always thought I hated my father and I'm still convinced of that, but I can't forget that he raised me when I was a child, so I want to be with him the moment he passes away."

Lorelie got up from the table and hugged Enric, she knew he didn't like sweet nothings but she wanted to make him understand that she was there for him. "I'm proud of you, you're doing a great job!" She whispered in his ear.

Enric already started to think about the trip. There was a ship sailing to England the next day, so that evening the Lefevre house was in a great fuss while preparing bags and documents.

VII.

Reconciled sinners

On the 20th of September, just after the sun had risen, Enric and Lorelie were at Le Havre's port. The ship set sail and after ten hours it docked in England.

While the two were travelling to Portsmouth, Lorelie was overwhelmed by happiness. She was excited about the idea of getting to know her husband's roots. A smile appeared on her husband's face when he saw his old house.

Lorelie and Enric arrived at his father's home. They knocked on the door with a deep feeling of restlessness.

A man, just a few inches shorter than Enric, with blond hair and dark eyes, opened the door.

"Good evening, Sir. You must be my dad's caretaker, am I right?" said Enric in a cold voice.

The man frowned and made a strange face.

"Ehm... Sir, - continued Erin - is everything alright? Maybe I wasn't clear enough: my father is Sir William Lefreve."

The man standing on the threshold didn't understand who he was talking about. Lorelie heard for the first time the name of Enric's father. Before the strange care keeper could answer, a woman ran towards Enric. She was short, with freckles and red hair tied in two messy braids. She hugged Enric with such a colourful hug, that Lorelie was afraid she could have hurt him.

Lorelie was focused on the oddity of this scene. She didn't hear Enric whispering to the woman: "I'm happy to see you too, aunt. Don't say a word about Anthony, please: she doesn't know about him."

"All right darling, but I know this won't end well, you should tell your wife about your family, and you should tell her everything" answered the woman.

VIII.

Redemption is for those who want it

Enric needed to talk with his father, so as soon as he could he went into his room.

"Hello dad, how are you? It has been a long time since the last time we met."

"Oh dear, you don't know how much I hoped you would come!"

Enric sat near his dad, he took his hand "Listen, I decided to put aside what I feel and come here. You are my dad. I've suffered all my life because of your absence. Now I'm married, and thank God I found new love and peace.."

"I'm sorry," said Enric's dad. He couldn't speak further because of a bad cough.

Enric didn't know what to do, he was worried about the reaction, he also didn't know what he felt. The man that caused his pain, also caused a series of events that made me meet the most beautiful thing in my life, Lorelie.

"I'm here to talk to you and clear up. As you know, after you left us I decided to change my life, go to France, but you also have to know that I did something... something very dishonourable."

"Oh dear, what did you do?"

Both of them smiled and then Enric continued

"Aunt Margaret is the only one who knows about it. She kept writing me letters, using my new address...and my new name. I'm not James Evans anymore, I'm Enric Lefevre now."

The old man didn't understand what he wanted to say.

“Dad, I changed all of my life. The life that you think you know is not the life that I’m living now. Now I’m an influential person in French society. I’ve been able to change this much thanks to Jack, a guy I met years ago. I’m sorry I never told you.”

His dad breathed heavily, while a tear fell on his face.

“It’s okay, son, I can’t blame you for this, the only thing that I can say after this long time is that I’m sorry. I ruined your life.”

“Don’t say that again.”

“But it’s the truth.”

With a very low voice, the father said: “Hug me, please.”

“I won’t do that.”

“Oh, stop it, also when you were a kid, you never did it!”

Both of them burst out laughing.

James and his father couldn’t know that Anthony was right outside the room, and that he heard every word.

When James saw him he tried to understand if he had heard something, and he was sure he did because of the smirk on his face.

“Dear brother, It’s been a long time since I received your news. I thought you were dead.” He had stepped away from his father, in order not to make him hear their conversation and cause him further suffering.

“Well Anthony, I’m not, but why haven’t you tried to reach me?” “You’re right. I’m not like you and I will tell you the truth.

“Which truth?” he asked impatiently.

“If you were dead I would have got all our dad’s inheritance, but you’re not. Now I have got only two options. I could get rid of you, or I could kindly ask you to give up on your part of inheritance. After all, I deserve that money more than you. I was there for our dad, while you were in another country living your new life.”

James couldn’t believe what he was hearing from his brother, he couldn’t believe that the only thing he cared about was money.

He was about to say something but Anthony chipped in:

“If you don’t give up on your inheritance I will tell all the French influential people the truth about you.”

“You can’t do that! And you even have any evidence!”

“I have, instead” he added, smiling. Enric thought immediately about one single person who could betray him.

IX.

Vital choices

James was nervous, angry and sad at the same time, but he had to do things with order, so he decided to talk again with his father the following day.

He walked in his room. When his father woke up, he told him how Antony had threatened him.

“I have something important to ask you, dad. I’m pretty sure that, even if I don’t do what he wants, and he reveals my secret, it wouldn’t be enough for him, and I’m afraid he could hurt you just to make you change your will.”

His father could not believe what he was hearing. Enric knew this could cause him further suffering, but he had to go all the way through it.

“There is a solution: I will renounce my right to receive my inheritance. I know it is not easy for you, but it’s the only way to make him stop.”

His father was listening while crying tears of sadness and anger, and in the midst of sobs, he murmured: "It's very noble of you. This is not right, but you seem to own a higher and greater justice"

Enric revealed his brother his decision who, once he got what he eagerly wanted, left. Now Enric was going to take care of his father, for the first time in his life.

James felt unexpectedly at peace. But he still had something important to deal with.

X.

Truth revealed

James started thinking about Lorelie and he didn't know what to do.

"If I tell her the truth she would be angry and she may not forgive me, but if I don't, she could find it out by herself, and I promised her that I would never lie again. I want to be a man with honour, I will tell her." These were James' thoughts.

He went immediately to Lorelie's room: "Lorelie, I've just talked with my father, but I must tell you something extremely important.

Lorelie was quite worried, she frowned and asked: "Tell me, what is it?"

James took a deep breath: "I lied to you...again. I lied about my past and my family, but I understood I made a mistake and I want to be honest with you."

Lorelie couldn't believe it, but she tried to stay calm and she nodded at James, to make him understand that she was listening.

"Well, my mom didn't die when I was born, she died when my brother was born. My brother is the man who opened the door when we arrived."

Lorelie was incredulous, she wasn't even able to speak, she just sat on her chair watching James and trying not to cry. James felt horrible but he had to say everything.

"That's not everything. I'm not a nobleman. I was born here in Portsmouth and I lived with my brother and my dad until he left us with our aunt. When I was 15 a friend helped me to change completely my identity. I wasn't James anymore, I became Enric and I went to France."

Lorelie was more shocked every second that passed but she forced herself to say: "That's unbelievable, but please keep telling me your story, I just hope this is finally the real one."

A tear fell on James' cheek, but he kept talking: "My brother, Anthony didn't know about my new life, I didn't tell him because I knew he would never accept. He also was the reason why my mother died. Realising that made me distance myself from him for good. Now I finally know why he's always stayed with my dad since the moment he got ill. It's because the only thing he cared about was my dad's inheritance."

Lorelie couldn't hold back her tears and she had lost control over her words.

"How could you do that? How could I marry someone like you, and what was I thinking when I forgave you the first time?! You didn't change at all, you're just a liar, nothing more!"

That day Lorelie decided to leave..

Outside the sun was covered by clouds and it was hailing. Heavy pieces of ice hit the carriages on the road and everyone was closing their windows with haste. All the doors were closed except for one, and aunt Margaret was looking out that door screaming at Lorelie: "Lorelie, darling, where are you going? It's not safe, come back!"

But Lorelie wasn't listening. As soon as he could, he arranged his trip back home.

XI.

Wounds healed

The journey was long and the sea was stormy. Lorelie was watching the sea from her hatch in the cabin. The waves crashed against the inspection hole. Lorelie tried to rest, but her thoughts were as wild as the sea. She didn't want to forgive James, but she didn't want to lose him so soon. She was afraid that, if their relationship would continue, he would lie probably again and again. She tried to think about something different and, after an hour, she finally fell asleep.

She woke up 30 minutes before the ship docked and she started to pack all her things. When she got out of the ship she took a carriage and went to her house. She was finally at home.

When she knocked on the door her mum opened. The woman was very confused, but before she could speak, Lorelie hugged her and murmured in her ear: "I'm very happy to see you, mom. But I was right, he isn't the right man for me."

Rose was about to reply but her daughter immediately headed to the living room, where her dad used to sit when he read his books.

"Hello dad." Her dad was surprised but he immediately smiled and said: "Now that you're here I can say I never felt better."

Lorelie burst into tears. They hugged tight. "I thought you were going to stay in England with Enric for a while, what happened?" he asked in a worried voice.

Lorelie's gaze became sad and full of melancholy: "You told me to know Enric better, and I tried, but he lied to me twice about his family. He changed his identity. His true name is James Evans." She told him all the truth, confessing she was so upset and undecided about what was the right thing to do.

Her father was quite shocked while hearing all the story. Nevertheless he didn't lose his temper. On the contrary, he appeared very reasonable. "I can only imagine how hard this can be for you, but let me say that this is certainly hard for James too. I won't tell you what I would do if I were you because it's your life and you must make your own decisions. Do you remember when we used to read books on this sofa?"

Lorelie didn't understand why he was talking about that. "Yes, dad, of course, I remember, but what does this have to do with James and I?"

"I don't think you remember which books we used to read, but there was one story that never bored you. In the story the protagonist always gave a second or a third chance, no matter how serious the mistake was, she believed in redemption and in change."

Lorelie smiled again, she hugged her father and said: "Thank you, dad, I know what to do now."

The next morning Lorelie told her parents that she wanted to go back to England to talk with James and tell him that she had forgiven him. A couple of hours later she left.

XII.

Forgiveness

Lorelie arrived at James' home hopeful and nervous at the same time. She was excited about talking again with James. When she arrived a storm started.

Hopefully, she managed to reach the main door and knocked.

Aunt Margaret opened the door and could not believe her eyes when she saw her nephew's wife.

"Lorelie! What are you doing here? Asked the woman, letting her in.

"I need to talk with James. Is he here? "

"No, he's at the pub. He has been there since this afternoon."

"Where is it?"

"It's round the corner."

"Thank you."

"Wait, I will not let you go alone up there, I'm going with you." "Thank you, you are very kind to come with me"

It didn't take them long to get there, although the stormy weather made it more difficult.

Once inside, she watched around her and finally saw James.
He was screaming and crying.
“Nobody, nobody is with me now! I’m completely alone” said James, alternating sigh to tears.
“Welcome to my life!” said one person sitting near him.
“To health and to all pretty women” said another one.
He no longer looked like himself, his eyes were countoured by purple and black dark circles, his body was trembling.
Lorelie rushed to him.
She arrived behind him and she touched his shoulder.
He jumped on his chair, but then he turned around and he saw his lovely wife.
“L..Lorelie...” he said with a low voice.
“What are you...” he tried to say something but, suddenly, he lost his senses.
Lorelie and Margaret provided first aid, but then two people helped them to take James home.
Lorelie was thinking of her husband. She had never seen him in this condition. She was worried, scared and she felt helpless.
When they finally arrived home, Margaret opened the door.
His father could glimpse James from his room and the view of his son made him turn even more pale.
“What...What's happened to my dear?” he asked, almost in tears.
“I found him at the pub.” Said Lorelie, with sorrow. “When I arrived he was destroyed.”
James was lying on his bed.
“You can go darling..I’m going to stay here with him all night if you want” said Margaret.
“Thanks, but you don’t have to, I will stay with him. I’m his wife.”
While Margaret was leaving she saw her nephew sleeping and Lorelie near him: this view gave her the hope they would stay together.

XIII.

A new beginning

Next afternoon the sun was high in the sky, and a sweet sunshine woke up James. He didn’t remember anything about the night before. He just knew he was desperate and drunk like he had never been. He opened his eyes and felt someone breathing next to him, it was Lorelie. He was extremely happy to see her, and he kindly took his hand, while smiling. The girl woke up and smiled back. There was nothing more painful and greater than the joy of forgiving and being forgiven.

Epilogue

Lorelie and Enric went back to France. James’ father died, surrounded by the love of his son, sister and daughter in law.

On their trip back home Enric and his wife were standing on the deck, staring at the rough sea. They knew their whole life was like that sea. Rough and calm, as the adventures they had experienced. Both of them had learnt something that would be like a lighthouse in a stormy sea: mistakes cannot be erased, they can just be forgiven.