

The Dark Angel

As told by Andrea *

(Last name withheld by request)

In Erie County there is an old graveyard that has the now ruined statue of an angel who stands guard over the graves placed in her charge long ago. There are two versions to the legend. As one version of the story goes, a mother sometime in the early 1900's took the life of her young daughter. Stricken by terrible grief the family had the statue of a larger than life angel erected over the child's grave. The statue is slightly larger than a full-grown man, with a melancholy expression on its face. The eyes of the angel would appear to follow you no matter where you moved as if it were alive.

A few years after her daughter's death, the mother in a fit of sorrow took her own life. She was buried in a grave next to her daughter under the watchful eye of the lifeless stone guardian. It was shortly after her death that strange unexplainable things began to occur. Local cattle and livestock near the cemetery were being found slaughtered in a horrible fashion. Quickly attention focused on the statue over looking the mother and daughter's graves, as the hands and mouth of the angel appeared to be covered in blood. The local people began to whisper that the evil spirit of the mother was condemned to live for eternity in the statute as punishment for her sins, and it was her vengeful spirit that stalked and slew their animals in an attempt to quell her rage. It was also rumored that if you climbed up on to the angel's back she would give a ride through hell. After weeks of butchered animals being found in the fields, and rumors running rampant through the community, the local's authorities had finally had enough. They entered the graveyard and sawed off the statute's hands and wings. After this the killing of the livestock ceased. The angel now flightless had to remain in the cemetery. Shortly there after visitors to the graveyard noticed that rusty streak marks appeared on the angel's face running down the cheeks from the watchful eyes. The local wives tales said that it was the tormented soul of the mother weeping for her sins.

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The second version of the story claims that the graves beneath the angel are those of two sisters named Lydia and Alice. It is the spirit of Alice that is suppose to live in the statue, but the reason why is not given. The reason for the statue's disfigurement is as follows. In the early 1900's a cholera epidemic swept through the area. It sadly took its heaviest toll on the young children. Bereaved mothers would enter the cemetery at night and lay their dead babies in the angel's outstretched arms, and implore her to take their souls to heaven. A local parson found out about the practice and declared that it was blasphemous and evil. He convinced his flock that it was the angel whom roamed about a night stealing the souls of their children and taking them to hell. It was then that the good people entered the cemetery and removed the hands and clipped the angel's wings.

It is considered bad luck to be disrespectful or damage the statue now days. A group of boys elected to go and torment the angel to see if the legend was true not to long ago. They decided to do this by vandalizing the statue. All the boys involved in this stunt were supposedly killed in a terrible car accident, except the one who remained in the car while the others were desecrating the graveyard.

Another tried the popular trick of placing a tape recorder at the base of the statue, and coming back later to pick it up. He was floored when during the first few minutes of the recording when a woman's voice was heard to say, "You will receive no harm."

The location of this site is in Erie County west of Vermilion, Ohio. Go west on State Route 2 to Route 60 and then head south. A few miles down the road you will run into Mason Road, turn right to Maple Grove Cemetery a few miles down the road. The angel sits far back into the cemetery under a tree. Vandals have since removed the angel's head I am told. The grave of Lydia shows she died in 1926 and Alice in 1918. Andrea who submitted the tale hopes to send me a photo of the statue sometime in the near future. I will post it here as soon as I receive it.