

Orpheus Walks

by C. A. Fulwell

“The rules are simple,” he says: I walk my dead wife all the way out of hell. She stays behind me; no looking back at her whatsoever— we both go free. Thanks, Hades. Arsehole.

Now, the thing about walking out of the *fucking Underworld*... it’s a really, really long way, and my feet hurt already.

Every time I so much as pause, or sigh, Eurydice pipes up:

“What’s the matter? Is being alive too hard?”

“No, no, it’s fine. You were bitten by a bloody snake and died in agony, right? Oh, no, wait a minute...”

In a way, it’s comforting that death hasn’t changed her.

The lyre, blessed and bestowed by *Apollo himself*, sits heavy in my hands, but I won’t abandon it—music was what won her heart back in the day, after all.

Again, I play.

It works! As we trudge toward the land of the living, she sings. I *love it* when she sings: the perfect blend of beauty and sex.

We walk, we make music, we walk... This walk never ends! I need to see her face.

I turn. I shouldn’t have.

Hades holds my wife’s severed head aloft on a stake, a mocking, horrific flag. Deep, repugnant laughter. “Don’t stop, Orpheus! It’s been centuries since we had a good sing-song! Right, boy?”

A bark. Three barks. He’s brought the dog.

Hades whistles. Cerberus is on me in a heartbeat but I barely feel it.

Hades truly is an asshole. But he has a lovely voice.