

## Charlotte Alone

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# **Charlotte Alone**

by [Taz](#)

## Summary

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*I'm sorry, Mum...!*

The things one does for one's children.

*I'm sorry, too.* She would have whispered back, but she was compressed into a singular point smaller than a poppy seed on the bagel she'd had for breakfast. As hard as she tried, she couldn't move. How long...?

*Maaaaa...! Matttttta...!*

There came the fading wail of a child in pain and she flexed in instinctive response. The mother urge gave her strength, something burst within her, and one trillionth of a trillionth of a trillionth of a second after she had poured herself into Nothingness there was space, swelling at an ever-expanding rate but, more importantly, she was free!

*Lucifer!* she called. *I knew you couldn't...*

There was no reply.

Apparently, he could; the wound in the world was gone; he was her true son, after all.

Something bright flew past her head. Uriel's knife! She reached for it, but then let it go on, flying toward the edges of the universe; it was useless without the key. The fact that the knife was the only bright thing anywhere made her extend her senses and consider this place of exile, this new universe.

*What a dump!*

It was dim and opaque, without form and void.

Now what was she going to do? She was utterly alone. That last thing she had ever wanted to be, the very reason she had sought out her husband the first time—sensing him in the void—that stiff-necked, pretentious old windbag—and what a fiasco that had turned out to be.

Still, the attraction between the two of them, at that moment when energy had just begun to turn into matter had been undeniable. She found herself smiling; his neck hadn't been the only thing stiff in those millennia before he had invented religion. What matter! What energy! It had been fun and there had been the children in all their bright legions...

Here, it occurred to her, was, as Lucifer had said, a chance to create a whole new universe, and decorate exactly the way she wanted. And she had all of time in which to do it.

Feeling the tingling resurgence of nearly forgotten powers, she rose up, pulling a length of blue satin ribbon from her jacket pocket, and began to tie her hair back.

Her hair? Her long, blonde hair? That was odd, to say the least. Of all the avatars she had assumed over the ages, why keep this form, under these circumstances? Despite the firm haunches and legs that went on forever, it wasn't practical. She, whose rib cage had roofed the sky, whose blood had filled the world ocean, and whose tail, in some cosmologies, had formed the Milky Way...?

She was overwhelmed with a sudden bout of nausea that forced her to bend over and vomit up the tandoori chicken with garam masala sauce pizza that she'd eaten for lunch. When it was over, she kept her head down, alternately cursing, wishing for a glass of warm ginger ale, and laughing, because time was no longer in unlimited supply.

*And the morning of the first day was morning sickness.*

Once she had recovered, it took a millionth of a second to sort out a few natural forces. With the ground work done, it took three seconds to create some fundamental particles, along with a few simple elements. It always took longer to create light: ten thousand years.

*And the morning of the second and third day were also morning sickness.*

It took another three hundred thousand years to produce neutral atoms, but she could work with those. She blew a few apart, concocted a passable ginger ale, and labored on.

Eventually, the bouts of sickness passed and it became frustrating that Tasty Pizza still didn't deliver across universes.

Three hundred million years later there were colorful galaxies, blazing stars, and rocky planets. It was a celebration of light, if not of life.

And then the baby came.

She cleaned him and fed him and held him up to the light of the blazing yellow star of the planet which she had chosen for his birth.

He had his father's grey eyes.

"I was hoping to have the earth and the water separated by the time you turned up," she said. "But we'll finish the work together and, someday, I promise you, I'll take you to meet all of your brothers and sisters."

*Finis*

*5/31/2017*

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