**In Search of Greatness**

It was a late December night when I met her. It was long ago but it felt like just yesterday when we first met. It was 6 years ago and I was 14, she was a year older than me.

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In spite of the cold, I decided to go out in the dead of the night. 3:02am, it was freezing outside, and frankly, I was freezing outside, but it definitely couldn’t wait. I needed to think, I needed to walk. I didn’t bother *sneak*ing out of my home since I was sure that everyone was asleep. I opened the front door, locked it and walked to my neighborhood park. I decided to sit under one of the street lamps. “Smart of me” I said to myself, as the spot I chose was the only spot outside not completely covered in snow. “Who you talking to?” a feminine voice from behind announced. I wasn’t familiar with the voice and decided to turn around slowly. Hooded, at first glance, even under the illumination of the street lamp, she was a shadow. I couldn’t see whom the voice belonged to, but the longer I stared, the more feminine the shadow seemed. “So, are you going to answer my question?” she announced again.

“I-I, who, WHAT?” I said, almost frustratingly.

“You were talking to yourself, in the middle of winter, 3:08am” she spoke, “What did you expect me to do, walk away?”

I sat there, dumbfounded for a couple seconds, unable to speak, but eventually, I did.

“I’m here, in search of greatness”, I finally replied. She walked towards me, let down her hood, and sat down.

“Me too.”

~

Her name is Hazel. Hazel Ross.