

# Our Lady of Sorrows

by Kambriel

On the evening of November 5, 1999, an English priest on sabbatical commenced to fall asleep in his candlelit room at the LaSalette shrine in Attleboro, Massachusetts. In its unwatched liberation, the flickering glow of candlelight grew until it reached an unbridled and uncontrollable fury of flames. The several priests on retreat in this previously bucolic setting awoke to the flames, and with the helping hand of grace, all exited unharmed into the cold November night. Inside, the flames spread, consuming all that which was not made of stone.

The vision was most awe-inspiring, this sprawling and stately abbey in its lone grandeur, with raging tongues of fire lapping through rows of massive arched windows, set against the black backdrop of a midnight sky.

For months now, the devastated beauty of the abbey's stone walls, turrets, and archways have loomed upon the horizon holding true to its status as a sublimely religious place, keeping alive the memory of what once was.

Left alone, these stately abbey ruins could weather through the ages, as testimony to the fragility of that which man has wrought, transforming into a silent observer made from stone. There they would stand in remembered dignity, with a holy air, bearing witness to the passage of centuries yet to come.

Sadly, it is not to be. Unlike the myriads of ruined beauties dotting the countryside of the British Isles and elsewhere throughout the world, where reverence is still held for these majesties of stone, it seems the U.S. has taken an unsentimental stand — always in the name of progress. Fearing lawsuits filed by possible trespassers who might be injured, plans are in place to utterly demolish this graceful remain within a month's time. In its place, a modern church of cement and glass is being constructed.

Hopefully, within our souls, we can give a home to the ghost of this beautiful relic, to extend its magnificent presence even after it has vanished, nevermore for mortal eye to see.

✪ KAMBRIEL ✪

