

Buttercup Dream, and You

(a story about love lost)

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♥ Last night I dreamt of you.

You lived on a broken farm with weed gardens and wild flowers. There were long blue hills and box canyons behind the farm. A desert was in front, sparse and dry, flaming red with shrubs and yellow with islands of buttercups.

When I arrived you were walking down from the hills, shuffling through the flowery desert. You walked like an old, tired man, shuffling along, stopping to pick flowers or to look up into the sky. Your clothes were baggy and torn and gray. You were far away but I could see it was you and when the sun caught your eyes they flashed like quasars.

I walked out to meet you in the silence of the desert. You looked up and I was there. You were much older than I imagined you to be and as I saw this I sank inside my self, leaving my white shell exposed to the hot sun and the penetrating glare of your quasar eyes. I gasped and the shriek that came from my heart was stolen in its genesis, before it passed over my lips, taken from me by a hawk that circled high overhead, and cried out by the hawk as it soared over the fiery desert. Like a gale pulling tumbleweeds behind it, my scream blew into the box canyons and was amplified between those walls of dust and stone until it shook the earth, until the canyons began to crumble, until it collapsed into itself in a burst of black anger.

And then it was you and I alone in the empty desert, standing in silence, looking down, burying our toes in the hot sand.

When the hawk whirled down and landed on your shoulder it spoke to me and as it did I fell into a deep sleep. I dreamt that the hawk was your spirit set free and that your body wandered the desert in perpetual decay -- the last shards of you evaporating in the desert sun, your skin withering like

discarded flowers. And when the steely talons of the hawk tore into your shoulder I saw that it was flesh and when the hawk lifted you with its iron wings outstretched and laughter in its eyes and began to carry you away I woke up.

It was a dream within a dream.

The hawk was gone.

In my dream you smiled and you gave me the blue roses you were holding and then I knew that the blue hills far away were hills of blue roses. But the roses melted in my hands and dripped onto the desert sand, the drips becoming tiny silver crosses as they struck the earth. You watched sadly as they melted, your eyes following the blue drips downward, following them over my hands and downward, pulling the corners of your mouth down with them, pulling tears out of the corners of your eyes.

After the roses melted into crosses you turned and you shuffled away. In my dream I called to you and you stopped and when you turned you were young again and you took me and we made love, there, on an island of yellow buttercups.

When you took me I cried.

We made love as the sun melted into the hills of blue roses, and we made love as the moon rained its golden haze over the desert night and the owls called to one another about the mice in the dunes, and we made love as the moon fell from the sky and the wild creatures wandered out of the darkness and circled around us -- their eyes shimmering with the hunger of their innocence, their teeth flashing like silver daggers, the chorus of their wild songs humming to the irregular rhythm of their collective hearts -- and we made love until the creatures danced and laughed with the morning dew and ran off into the desert as the sun rose above the farm and burned our naked bodies.

We said nothing.

In between making love and making love again you slept between my legs with your ear to my belly, while I dreamt of forever, there, you and I, floating

on the islands of yellow buttercups.

In my dream the hawk returned in the night. I watched it soar above us, capturing falling stars like prey, diving and hooking them in its talons the moment they would have burned themselves out, feeding on them from the bloated limbs of thorny cactus with pride in its egg-shell eyes -- the captured stars spraying sparks of blue light which drifted over the dunes and, like fireflies, disappeared. But one star escaped and the hawk -- diving in pursuit but missing its quarry -- turned suddenly and plunged earthward and entered deep inside me, taking my breath away and pulsing my heart wildly.

When you awoke you lifted your head off my belly and crawled up to kiss me. You kissed me with long, soft, slow kisses, your lips fresh and cool, your quasar eyes burning into mine. You kissed along my neck and over my breasts. You held me with your eyes. You kissed down my belly and between my thighs. After we made love again you smeared my thighs with the velvet nectar of yellow buttercups, picking them one-by-one, each time whispering a prayer to free the tiny spirits possessed within them.

The spirits were like splinters of glass and they fled like whispers.

You teased me then, smearing those smooth petals into my naked thighs, my head falling back, my shoulders pinned to the ground by the silent pleasure in my heart, my eyes closing. And then we made love again.

In the shadows cast by the cactus standing rigid and aloof, the moonbeams lingered like rejected lovers.

As I watched the moonbeams were changed into souls. From the shadows they emerged, souls walking with black hats and stiff canes, and souls bent with solitude shuffling carelessly and hopelessly along, and souls tight with fear and anguish. In the river of passing souls I whispered your name, too soft to be heard, but in the melancholy dew of the midnight moon, in a silent tryst, you took my hand in yours and you lifted me gently. We held hands and looked into each other's lives.

You tasted the wind then, searching with your quasar eyes, until the hawk descended from the sky, like an angel lowered on a string, wings lifted behind it, and landed on your shoulder. You whispered to the hawk and it

lifted and in a streak of orange flame it burned over the desert to the hills of blue roses and circled high above them until the ground began to shake and a black stallion running like death before a harem of white mares spilled out of the blue hills and raced wildly before the wind.

The hawk flew over them.

As fierce as my desire for you the horses circled us, bucking and kicking all around us, consuming us in their violent frenzy, and from a cloud of red dust and desert sand the black stallion reared and loomed over me, a black cyclone of hooves and teeth and nostrils.

And then the stallion's wild and unyielding eyes crossed with yours. Cowed and solemn, it knelt before me. You took my hand and together we rode, the stallion taking us away, the white mares filling the desert behind us, the many wild creatures running out of the desert to again bear witness. Behind me, with your arms around me, with the reins in my hands and your naked body pressed to mine, you whispered eternal love in my ear, the strands of my hair ringing like chimes as your words passed over them.

Your words raced to my heart as the stallion raced blindly into a desert of buttercup bliss.

And then, in my dream, I awoke.

In my dream you slept between my legs, your ear to my body, your name etched in the yellow nectar of my buttercup things, etched in a tiny heart, your name and mine, Cupid's arrow shot through, an "I love you."

On our tiny island of buttercups I dozed in a sea of ecstasy.

But when the shadows crawled out of their thorny beds of cactus, when my thighs glowed crimson red with sunbeams and yellow with the smear of pulverized buttercups, the hawk came again and took you in its talons. You hovered over me then, tears of blue roses trickling over your cheeks, dripping from your chin, tears of tiny blue roses falling over me as I lay beneath you.

And then the hawk took you away.

In my dream I tried to follow you but I could not. I struggled to arise but was pinned to the earth by the sadness that filled my heart like lead. I screamed as you drifted away, my screams turning to sobs, to whispers, to empty echoes drowned by the silence of the fiery desert.

But it was only a dream, within a dream, and when I awoke, in my dream, I awoke.

I could remember nothing.

It seemed I had been somewhere with someone I knew, but I could remember nothing.

I lay shivering under the scratchy wool blankets in my empty bed in a cold dark room with floors of creaking wood and the trickle of mice in the ceiling and when I thought of buttercups I did not know why.

I arose and in the light of the empty hall I saw a picture of you taken when we were lovers. The tears that filled my heart burst forth like a scream as I stumbled back and buried my body beneath the covers in my empty bed. It was, I knew then, the desert in my dream.