

awkward body quivered with emotion as she thought, "It's like a poem! Poets must live in an enchanted world like this!"

She sensed the shifting pattern of light and shadow on her rapt, upturned face and it seemed a special wisdom was being given to her. Slowly, ecstatically, she tried to translate her feelings into words, murmuring the lines aloud.

"The moon is holding court, wise and serene,
With all the grace of a heavenly queen.
Through the ages she has reigned at night,
Transformed ugliness with glorious light.
She smiles down through the lacy tree,
And I, being mortal, can but try to see
The incredible beauty her silver has wrought—"

What would rhyme with wrought? She shivered. It was a long while since the moonlight had set the piers gleaming and laid the path of dancing moonbeams on the water. "Has wrought on a drab world—"

The staccato sounds made by car doors, shrill laughter, high heels, banging screens, jerked her to her feet. The cottage looked huge and alien in the cold light.

The Rose

Charlotte Walton

WHEN James Kennedy had completed the construction of his fortune, he set about building his home. He had gathered for himself the greatest wealth and power a man could amass in his day, and he applied the same energy and determination to his house. When he had finished, he owned one of the most beautiful homes a man could create. Into his perfect setting he put his most prized possession, his Rose.

The house was a delight to the Rose. Every part of it, from the thick, soft carpets to the sloping lawns, had been ordered for her comfort. When Lucas woke her each morning by walking up from the place below her feet where he slept and pushing his cold nose into her hand, birds were singing in the tree outside her window and the sunlight penetrated the sheets, covering her like a warm blanket.

She and Lucas spent the days roaming the long halls, searching for the doorknobs of unfamiliar rooms, playing delightedly with the buttons and gadgets they found in unexpected places, or exploring the rose gardens and lawns. Sometimes, if they were lucky, they would discover the way to the garden house, where they could sit on the smooth benches and listen to the fountains splash over the rock gardens. If they were tired of walking they could lie on the soft

low couches in the parlor, where the only break in the cool silence was the far-away noise of servants working in the kitchen wing, and an occasional heavy whiff of food cooking. In the evenings they sat in the library with James while he told the Rose about his day in the world or read to her until it was time for Sarah to take her to her room. In the Rose's world there were only James, her father, Lucas, Sarah the nurse, and the house, until Red came.

He came on a rainy day, when they had grown tired of staying inside. Lucas had hurt his paw and refused to walk through the halls or climb stairs, so they stayed in the library. The Rose, bored with the day and Lucas, ordered their tea earlier than usual. When it came she was sitting curled up in Daddy's huge leather chair, half-dozing in the heat of the open fire. She heard the noise of the tea-cart in the doorway and motioned toward the table beside her.

"Put it there," she murmured. "I hope you remembered his meat."

There was no answer but the light clink of dishes being carried toward her.

Suddenly Lucas howled as if he had been hurt. She heard the crash of china and a thud on the floor beside her. Lucas scrambled to his feet, his claws scratching the tile hearth, and began to growl. A voice beneath her began to mumble words that James used frequently, but never allowed her to say at all.

"I don't think you'd better call him that," she advised. "He might try to hurt you. Hadn't you better stand up?"

"He deserves to get bit himself, the damn dog," came the answer. "Puttin' his foot out to trip me that way. Get out of the cream, you."

The Rose opened her mouth to scold him for speaking to Lucas so rudely, then changed her mind. The person was somebody new to her. "Who are you," she asked. "Why didn't Sarah bring our tea?"

He seemed to remember something, and spoke in a softer tone, more as people usually spoke to her. "Beg your pardon, Ma'am, I didn't mean to hurt your doggie. I was just mad at pulling a boner on my first day here. Soon as I clean this mess up I'll go fix the tray again. Don't worry."

She repeated her question, a little annoyed. "I asked you who you are. Didn't you listen?"

"Yes, Ma'am. I'm Freddie," he answered. "But honest, I won't ever spill the tray again. I just didn't know to look for that animal. There now, it's about all mopped up. If you'll just move your foot out of the tea. . . ."

She lifted her foot. "There you are. I didn't feel anything wet. When did you come, Freddie? Do you live somewhere else?"

"There, it's done. I'll go get another tray," he muttered. "Huh? Oh, I live down in the village. Most of the servants up here do. Be right back, Ma'am."

The doorknob clicked twice. The Rose heard his footsteps in the hall, then she and Lucas were alone. Lucas growled once more and lay back down. For the first time since they had been together, the Rose was angry with him. "Stop that silly noise," she told him. "You don't act like yourself today at all."

Lucas gave a long shuddering sigh. A log on the fire sputtered and fell lower in the grate. Outside, the rain droned steadily against the house, spattering sharply on the library windows. The Rose shivered. "I hope Freddie hurries back, don't you?" she asked Lucas.

When the door opened again, Sarah clumped in with the tray, scolding as she laid out the cups. "That's what comes of your getting fidgety, Miss, and ringing for your tea while I'm on my rest. Imagine having those village boys in here, of all places." She turned at the door to fling one last retort. "And next time, see that you keep that animal beside you. Your father wouldn't like his being around to trip all the help up." With that, she shut the door a little harder than usual, and left the Rose putting jam on Lucas' chop and thinking about the strange things which had happened.

The next day it rained again, so the Rose and Lucas stayed in the library. She was still thinking about the strange servant who had spilled the tea tray.

"How old do you suppose he is?" she asked Lucas. "He didn't sound much older than I am. His voice was higher than Daddy's, and not so much like he had to cough all the time. I think he must be young."

Then she would change her mind and wonder. "Maybe he really is old," she told Lucas. "They never send anyone young in here. What do you think?"

By early afternoon the Rose was seriously disturbed about her problem. "I really can't remember how he sounded," she explained. "I think we had better call him back and ask him. The clock just struck, and it isn't tea-time yet. If we rang now, he might come. Do you think we should?" She put down her hand to stroke Lucas' ruff, and he thumped his tail against the rug.

Taking this for an assent, she walked over to James's desk and pushed the bell. After she had rung it, she stood for several minutes leaning on the desk, thinking.

"He will bring it, won't he?" she asked anxiously. "You don't think they would make him go away just because he tripped over you?"

She turned quickly and came back to Lucas. "Be sure you don't trip him today," she ordered. "That would be terrible."

She walked around the room several times, picking up books and fingering them nervously, turning the objects on Daddy's desk over and over in her hands, and asking Lucas constantly if he was sure he did not hear someone coming.

When the door did open she was standing in the center of the room, about to question Lucas again. The clatter of the tea tray startled her, and she stood without moving. She was almost afraid to speak, now that the time had finally come.

He said the first words. "You poor little thing. How'd you get clear out here. Won't that dog even get up to bring you back? Here, I'll take you."

"But I can . . .," she started to protest, but changed her mind. His hand was on her arm, and he was leading her back to the big chair. He held her gently, as James always touched her, but he led her more firmly, as if he were not always afraid that he might hurt her. She let him put her in the chair, and sat silently while he fixed the tea.

Before she realized that he was leaving, the door clicked. "Oh," she cried. "I didn't want him to leave yet. Here," she told Lucas, thrusting his chop in his nose, "hurry up and eat. Maybe if we hurry he'll have to come back to get the tray, instead of Sarah. Hurry."

After that, all the days were different for the Rose. Mornings dragged endlessly, and she began to sleep later so that she would have less time to wait. She could hardly eat lunch, and by early afternoon she was so nervous that Lucas began to growl at nothing, as if he sensed her excitement. At first Sarah complained because she ordered tea so early, but when the Rose assured her that the new man was doing a fine job with the serving she forgot her grumbling and stayed in the Village longer each afternoon.

She spoke to him now every day. She learned to recognize his heavy footsteps in the hall, and once when she and Lucas passed the kitchen wing she could hear the servants talking, and distinguished his voice from the others. One especially warm afternoon he brought tea to them in the cool rose garden and stayed with them while they ate. She sat silently while he was there, breathing in the spicy scent of the hot tea mixed with the odor of the roses in the languid air, and listened to him.

He told her his friends called him "Red," and that his father was the head gardener for James. He seemed proud that his father was the head. He told her about schools, and about parties and dances. She had never known such things existed. She listened breathlessly to everything he said. He told her he was "going steady" with someone named Emily, but explained he "kinda went for" one of the maids named Sally. She wondered how old Emily and Sally were, and what going steady and going for someone meant. It sounded like traveling, and she did not want him to go away.

That night, after Sarah left, the Rose slid out of her bed and went over to her window. She knelt beside Lucas, with one arm on the sill and one hand on his head. For a long time they stayed there, while she sniffed the roses in the garden below and listened to the

light breeze moving the leaves of the tree beside her. She thought about the afternoon, and all of the things he had told her. "Red," she whispered to Lucas. "Don't you think that's a beautiful name?" She whispered it again to herself, "Red."

Once, without knowing it, her father almost broke her beautiful dream. It happened one night, while they were sitting in the library after dinner. James was reading to her from a magazine, and she was thinking about Red, trying to bring back the sharp, sweetish smell of him, so different from James's odor of expensive cigars and talcum powder. She concentrated so hard that she forgot to listen to James. He startled her by a sudden question.

"What's the matter with you, Baby," he asked in a worried voice. "You don't seem to listen to anything any more. Don't you feel very good?"

"Oh, yes, Daddy, I feel wonderful," she answered. "I feel better than I ever have. Don't I, Lucas?"

"I don't know," James continued. "Sarah says she's been worrying about you. How would you like to take a trip?"

The Rose was shocked. "Oh, no, Daddy, I couldn't leave you. I don't want to go anywhere. I just want to stay here."

"That's all right, Darling, I would go with you," he assured her. "Wouldn't you like to spend a month or so on the Bluebird? We could sail down through the Caribbean and maybe rent a house in Bermuda. Don't you think that would be nice?"

She began to cry. "Oh, Daddy, I don't want to go anywhere else. I just want to stay here in our wonderful house. How can you bear to think of leaving it?" She buried her face in Lucas' soft ruff, and he reached over to lick her hand.

James was puzzled. "There, there, Baby, don't cry," he said hurriedly. "I didn't know a trip would upset you so. Maybe I'd better have the doctor come out to check you over. You just forget all about the trip. We'll put off thinking about it until you feel better."

She was still sobbing when Sarah came to take her to her room. She lay awake for a long time after Sarah left, listening to the far-off noises from the servants' quarters, and smelling the roses below the open window.

Life went on in the same wonderful pattern for her after that. She thought about Red during her long days with Lucas, and talked to him every day at tea. There was no question now that he would bring it to her. He was part of the routine of her days.

One night, while she was dressing, a sudden thought came to her. "Lucas," she said as soon as Sarah had left, "Do you think I'm old enough to get married? Do you think I could marry Red?"

She went on with excited questions. "Do you know how old people are when they get married? Daddy told me once that he

married Mother when he got his first job. Red has a job here, so he must be able to get married. Oh Lucas, do you think I could?"

Then something else occurred to her. "But maybe he doesn't know that he could marry me. He probably doesn't, or he would have said something. Maybe Sarah told him not to tell me. Oh, Lucas, what if she did?"

She sat down abruptly on the edge of her bed and considered the possibility of such a situation. "What should I do? What do people do who want to get married?"

She sat for long minutes thinking, then jumped up triumphantly. "I know," she cried, "I'll ask Red to marry me. Then he will know that I can marry him. Oh, Lucas, think of it! When I ask him to marry me we can have him with us all the time, not just when he brings the tea tray."

With what was almost a dance step she ran to the window. "Oh, Lucas, the roses tonight! They seem happier than ever. Maybe they are happy because I am happy. Do you think so, Lucas?"

She put her hand on his head and they started to walk down to dinner. At the door she stopped long enough to tell him, "But remember, not a word to Daddy. We'll surprise him after I ask Red. He'll be so glad to know how happy I am, and that I'm not sick, after all. Ssshhh, now, keep our secret. Come on down."

After dinner that evening, her father took her arm. "How about a stroll through the garden, Sweet," he asked her. "The roses are prettier than usual tonight. I was looking at them through the window during dinner."

They walked together in silence, enjoying the garden, with Lucas pacing contentedly behind them. James noticed that the night air had grown cooler and stopped to take his jacket off and put it around the Rose's shoulders.

"There, Darling," he said fondly. "I wouldn't want my Rose to get sick in her own garden. Do the roses make you happy, my Dear?"

"Very happy, Daddy," she answered. "I feel as if everything in the world were as perfect as the roses tonight."

James took a long puff on his cigar and spread his feet farther apart on the rock path. "That's right, Honey. Always remember your Daddy will do anything in the world for his little Rose," he told her.

From the kitchen a sudden burst of laughter echoed through the cool air. James frowned and glanced toward the far wing. "I must talk to them in the morning," he grunted. "You know, Sweet, servants are getting to be a problem these days. Sarah has more and more trouble finding people who can do their work and still not bother you with noise. It's a shame sometimes, too. That boy of the head gardener's now, for instance."

"What boy, Daddy," the Rose asked vaguely. "Do I know about him?"

"No, I don't think so," he answered. "Sarah never tells you such things. She ought to do your work herself, and you wouldn't need to know about such people. It's just that boy of Adam's, the one who was bringing your tea in the afternoons. He ran off on the evening train with one of the maids. Sarah doesn't think he even bothered to marry her. Nasty boy. It's a good thing he wasn't around long enough for you to know him very well."

The night breeze was suddenly very cold, and the smoke from James's cigar made the scent of the roses seem too heavy. The Rose felt sick. She shivered and pulled James's dinner jacket closer around her. She reached out her hand to find Lucas's ruff, but grasped a rose bush instead. A thorn pricked her hand, and she put her finger in her mouth and began to cry.

IF EVER I HAVE LOVED YOU

Hubert P. Williams

If ever I have loved you,
It is now,
When sleep rests quietly
Upon your brow,
And first-born rays of light
Chase shadows of the night
That held your face—
If ever I have loved you
It is now.

If ever I have loved you,
It is now,
When sleep rests quietly
Upon your brow,
And Dawn leans from the skies
To see your mouth and eyes,
Which sun and air embrace—
If ever I have loved you,
It is now.

LIFE

Life, more clever far than I
Sent to breathe, love, ache and die,
Life, to whom we all must kneel,
Vain hope, soft moth, rock of steel,
Where my strength was wont to lie
Where my weakness broke to a cry,
Lying like a willow bough,
Bondage then, and bondage now.