

## The Happy Bug

The little stink bug crawled across a window sill laden down with an assortment of cups, flowers, a jar of honey, and a multitude of books. He had found entrance through a small crack in the wall where the window met the world. He slowly sauntered over the books, feeling the rough pages of the literature scratch across his legs. He was content and found solace in finally being inside, though he was already starting to miss the breeze.

A loud sound shook the sill, and he froze, unsure of where the noise came from. He was doing his best to stay calm, but he was petrified in place. When no immediate danger presented itself, he slowly turned towards the sound, and then the bug was paralyzed once more. The most beautiful creature his tiny eyes had ever beheld stood before him. She was gorgeous, with hair that burst into flame when the sun touched it. The goddess moved with grace and assurance and was flitting around the room in a flurry of motion.

The bug was entranced by her, and took a step forward to meet her. She came closer, sitting gracefully in a chair that might as well have been a throne for the way she perched atop it. She leaned backwards towards the bug, resting her shoulder delicately onto the sill. He took a chance with his life and boarded onto the shoulder of the most amazing creature he had ever had the good fortune to glimpse.

He found his way to the underside of the women's clothes and proceeded to admire her from the neck of her uniform. She continued about her day, traveling in a giant beetle that was quiet as it crawled along the giant town. The bug was in awe, for he had never seen the world as beautifully as it was by her side.

The day went on, for hours as he admired her. Every few minutes, she would smile as humans passed by her with so little as a glance in her direction. On occasion, her smile would waver, and it broke the heart of the little bug. She was the most glorious creature he had ever beheld, yet no one took a moment to consider her beauty. She was a masterpiece, a brilliant rose amongst a garden full of dull weeds. He could not fathom how anyone could disregard someone as beautiful as she.

After a few hours of her smiling at others, she went to a room that was surrounded by noise. She chewed on her food silently as the little bug peeked from beneath her shirt collar. The goddess's face was forlorn and distant, as though she couldn't quite reach the place that she was imagining. A single crystal dew drop silently caressed her face. The bug became sad as well, for if someone as beautiful as she couldn't see anything happy in the world, how could he?

She went back to her smiling, but the bug could see the quiet water behind her eyes. His tiny heart broke for her. He sniffled, and ducked beneath her shirt again so he wouldn't see the sadness of the world reflected in her eyes. At that moment, the goddess touched her shirt, just next to him. She was consoling him as much as he was trying to imagine her sadness. She appreciated him and didn't want him to feel sad. That gave the little bug hope, but he couldn't shake all the sadness away.

Suddenly, he felt her heart speed up. He poked his head out of the shirt, and saw her smile, but the water was gone. His goddess turned and left the lowly people and went back to the room where she had let her sadness show. However, she wasn't crying now. She grabbed a group of noisy objects that jingled as she touched them from a red box and ran outside into the darkness. He noticed her gazing up at shiny, white fireflies in the dark web above her. She smiled genuinely as she looked at them, and the bug's heart swelled for her. She was happy, and in love with life. Even though the sadness was consuming her, she granted herself moments of

bliss. It almost felt as though she was sharing the moment with him, and he felt a little proud that she would do something so kind for him as invite him into her life.

On the way home in the black beetle, the bug was watching her. The beetle made her glow green, and the little bug felt the sadness again. How could one as fair, kind, and glorious as his goddess even notice an inferior bug like himself? He felt the crushing sorrow, and lowered his head to her skin. He could never be with the one he loved and idolized, and it destroyed him.

As she walked back to the small city where she lived, he kept glancing at her as she walked. She never glanced in his direction, and it pained him to look at her. She would never see him. He decided that once he had the chance, he would never again look upon her face, for it was too agonizing to watch her go by life sad and oblivious while he was the one person who loved her so much.

After she had stopped walking, he decided it was time for him to depart. He was just about to leave, when her shirt came off. She was standing in front of herself, both sets of her eyes staring at the other. He was in awe of their being two of her, and it made him pause before he left her behind for good. He took one last look to take with him, and he was about to wander off of her shirt, when his leg was crushed beneath a heavy piece of metal that she laid on top of him. She did not notice at first as he struggled in agony. He couldn't lift the metal, and he was slowly being crushed. He was dying, he knew that, but he was happy she would be the last thing he would see.

Suddenly, she glanced down at him. She was startled for a moment but realized his pain. She watched him, unsure of what to do, but then she took pity on the small creature. The water had come back to her eyes, and the bug was shocked to realize that this time, the tears were for him. He felt a happy glow despite the pain, but his vision began to fade. His goddess turned on a small stream for his funeral, and she knocked him into a tiny river of silver and white marble.

He stared up at her, her fire hair framing her beautiful face that held tears for him. She was watching as he was lifted from the slab of stone. He glided down into an abyss, and her face was sad to see him go. He died in peace knowing that his goddess was his killer, but she had given him more happiness than any other bug had ever known.