

The Blossom-Maker

Dedicated to Alison Hodson (Ilkley based artist and friend) for Christmas 2013 – in celebration of all the 'blossom' she also brings to the world.

Not once upon a time but time and time. And then time and time again. Starts this happening not happened, the Blossom-Maker's refrain.

And perhaps not just time and time, but outside time completely. For though of course it must have started once, it cannot be described neatly. Every story must begin but when this one began, nobody was there but him – which makes it a riddle fit to make your head spin.

And if he was already there. Before, previous and prior. Well what about his once upon? – They say he does not have one.

It's marvellous, it's wonderful, you're spot on with that thought. It's the best feeling to have around the Blossom-Maker, this wonder that can't be taught. There are many more of course, for sure – so many they can't be constrained. They bubble-up and whirl around and dance and fly and sing. Like rainbow-coloured butterflies captivating your vision, these feelings of beauty take over everything.

But you will see that, freshly know that, when his story truly starts – which it can now and it will now - now we've grasped the strange beginning part.

Not once upon a time but time and time. And then time and time again. The Blossom-Maker does what is implied – even directly described – by his name.

Sometimes he makes blossom of the most tender, gentle pink. But other times it's white more pure than you could picture – just think. Occasionally it's tinged with green but more often it's mellow yellow. One of the best I've ever seen though is actually purple suffused with red.

And unsurprisingly – because we're in a story – the Blossom-Maker doesn't stop there. Some of his colours are simply quite truly way beyond compare. For they are far beyond our sights and outside of our rainbow. Colours you've never seen before and couldn't even half-way imagine. Colours better than your favourite shade of your favourite, favourite ever. Colours so rich and so new and so deep they're more like jewels or treasure.

It's a very hard job to write a story well when there are simply no words for what you're trying to tell. People say that all the time quite matter-of-a-fact-edly – you know, that they can't quite find the words to capture something accurately. But this is different. This is strange. And absolutely true. For in this case there are no words that will even remotely do. For how could there be words to talk about, to describe or to convey – if the something that you're saying about was never seen before today.

A few attempts to paint these colours might be magical; radiant; vibrant... but they all fall short. For there's no science or dictionary, no thesaurus or anything-ology, that gives them a second or first thought.

Back to the blossom then.

Perhaps as we struggled to capture the colours, the shapes will be better displayed, as I rhyme for you, describe for you, this echo of the Blossom-Maker's own refrain.

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The Blossom-Maker is even more creative with shapes. There's no end to the variety of outlines he makes. Small, delicate petals and five pointed stars – neat and restrained. And great big heads of flowers so huge their twigs and branches can hardly hold them and threaten to bend and break with the sheer wonder of beauty that can't be supported or contained.

Pointed and rounded; in clusters and alone; like a lily, like a rose... like a single thought alone.

But then there are shapes you've never seen before for he is not constrained by circles, triangles, squares and more. He weaves and he moulds and he shapes and he sculpts and out pours more and more that has just simply never been seen before.

Not just with shapes does he surpass expectation, the scents he concocts are an utter sensation. Sometimes you will catch hints of just one at a time. Sometimes a cocktail of perfumes sublime. Many are floral – a dazzling bouquet – but others are so unusual I can hardly say... what they smell of, remind of and positively beguile of as they dance past your senses in play.

Colours, shapes and scents – all far beyond description. New textures and even flavours created – all integral parts of the Blossom-Maker's vision.

He puts it on trees; he lays it on floors; he paints it all over the sky. So fast he creates it, so endlessly makes it that everyone coming close is amazed.

In an instant they're surrounded and utterly astounded by a swirling, shifting cloud of pink and purple with darts of red, of white tinged with green and colours unseen which tingle and mingle and leave them half-dizzy at the splendour and the loveliness and the altogether indescribable-ness of The Blossom-Maker's blossom.

And of him himself.

For he's playful, he's careful, he's incredibly, constantly skilful.

And the result?

There's beauty *everywhere*.

He cannot help himself, he just creates and creates. Everywhere he walks there's blossom in his wake.

Imagine a juggler, or a conjurer waving their hands. Now picture a snow globe – quick, fast as you can. Put the two together... and swap the snow for blossom – and you might just get the drift of a glimpse of a hint of a half-thought of what he can do.

There's *no-one* like The Blossom-Maker.

In a way you could say he's busy because he's always at it. But somehow busyness is missing it, just doesn't quite hit it. For if you look closely his smile soon shows something more wondrous than you could suppose.

He never grows tired and he never needs sleep and he's just so perfectly happy, totally restful and at peace...

That you can't help thinking... "is this really his job? The more he creates, the more he seems restored!"

He moves with great speed in an elegant dance – whipping up an almost frenzy as blossom pours and pours from his hands. Almost but not quite... because a frenzy is uncontrolled – hasty. And the Blossom-Maker is no more rushed than he is lazy! No he is not hurried a bit. And he could easily stop – he's in charge of it. But he simply chooses not to stop. Because his blossom-making is how he shows love.

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And behind him, after him, every each time?

There's beauty *everywhere*.

The blossom world he creates is magical, fantastical. And of course utterly, entirely sustainable. Mountains and lakes, cities and schools, homes and highways – he makes them all in petals of wonder. Why build with bricks when such glory's available? Why use cement when you have such material? Concrete, granite – such dull words and stuff. Next to blossom, more blossom made out of love.

Our story might end there and wouldn't that be splendid? With more beauty and dancing and myriad colours blending. And unfolding, carpeting, endlessly unending? With houses and people all made out of flowers – so pretty, so ideal, so, so.... beyond words.

But it cannot.

Sadly it cannot.

Ugliness threatens The Blossom-Maker's art. And destruction of his blossom world tears and breaks his heart.

He witnesses things that make him cry – some people let his blossom die.

And others pluck, hoard and take it all. Then there's whole miles with nothing but bareness and cold.

There are trampers and stampers that grind petals in dirt. And cutters and pickers that are as bad or worse.

And there's winter that comes and fades colour away, and freezes and squeezes till everything's grey.

And there's fire that burns all the blossom completely. And leaves only ashes. Always only ashes.

There's war over blossom and his blossom-people get hurt.

Some are left alone. Some have no home. Some run away and hide.

Some cry and cry and cry just like he does. Tears stain their petals and crumple their beauty. They fade and shrivel and dwindle completely.

And The Blossom-Maker can hardly believe what he sees – even though now it's old news for the happening happens over and over again as he grieves. And just like his creating, the ugliness is a refrain. And sometimes it's LOUD. UNBEARABLY LOUD.

Deafening almost.

Then silent and empty – the hateful sound of a bad ending – so far from, so different to what he had intended.

And sometimes the ugliness destroys such precious wonder, that you can't help wondering, does he wonder?

Should it stop? This creating? This endlessly making? If it's all going to end up like this... is it worth risking it for this?

Especially when the Blossom-Maker sees and finds – ashes. Only ashes left behind.

But it cannot stop.

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Simply it cannot.

Into the emptiness left by the flames – strides The Blossom-Maker.

Into the silence and stillness remaining – dances The Blossom-Maker.

Into the grey and grit and discolour. Here he comes. It's The Blossom-Maker.

In the midst of the ash-fields, he stoops, slowing his pace – then releases beauty more beauty reflecting his grace.

Never ceasing his weaving, his making, his creating – out comes more blossom – more colour is born. People are lifted where they've crumpled in loss, and somehow the new flowers are even better than the ones that they lost.

And now he puts blossom into their own hands – teaches them to craft it as part of his plan. Sculpting it, shaping it, clumsily at first. Soon the blossom-people grow daintier at sharing his work.

It's dazzling, it's wondrous, it's so kind and so baffling.

Though he walks down avenues of ashes and dust. He doesn't give up. He isn't defeated. He endlessly recreates what's been horribly depleted. And he scoops ash and whirls ash round and around till more colourful blossom pours from his artisan hands.

And it's hard to decide what's more amazing to see – the original work or the new design as it transforms and is re-born and nothingness becomes something-beautiful-ness and is no longer empty.

In one place of unbelievable destruction he follows close behind those who are burning. Stretching ahead of them lies so much gleaming, but with each step their flames rob colour and meaning.

But don't fear, don't despair, don't focus on the pain – for look he is one step behind already creating again. Then suddenly, in an avalanche – a fierce storm of petals – he's one step ahead and they themselves are overtaken. Stopped short and re-created in person. And then they're running and skipping and dancing like him – and blossom is pouring, and pouring, and pouring in new colours and shapes and amounts and directions.

It's spinning, it's winning, it's unstoppably shimmering.

And this is what happens and happens again in this happening of a story that bears The Blossom-Maker's name.

And if you love beauty and blossom and truth, then look for him, search for him and find him you will.

It might be a glimpse, just a fleeting impression. A certain light, a stunning flower, or an almost-maybe vision. But it will be his work, his design, his delight, and you might just feel the strength of his light.

And if you see grey and only grey anywhere, don't think it will become more than you can bear. Because where there are ashes he can't resist intervention. Soon he will come with new life-blossom past description.

So look for him, watch for him, wait for him still. The Blossom-Maker is coming and the world will be filled... with the glory, the beauty, the whirling new-pretty – of blossom and blossom and more blossom still.

And if friend he teaches petal-craft to you. Go on, please go on, make blossom too.

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