

BROKEN BEAUTY

By Steve Stutzman

There I lay beside the road, discarded in a heap. My life was over and I knew it. Mud matted my hair, blood covered the bruises where I had been hit, but the excruciating pain I was in was eclipsed by the agony of yet another rape. Rejection, fear, guilt, worthlessness and shame washed over me in waves, and death loomed as big as the toad who occupied the same slimy mud puddle as I.

..... I heard horses hooves thud in the distance, and I longed to die. Please, not another looker, another scoffer, another despising one. There was no place in my heart for another cut. The only clean place on my face was where the tears had cut a path through the grime. I shivered from the damp, cold hopelessness. My last shred of clothes had been ripped off. Not that it increased the shame any-- nothing could do that.

..... The carriage creaked and rattled closer. I hadn't the strength or desire to even look up. That is, until the carriage stopped.

..... The first thing I saw was the Royal insignia on the door. Oh horrors. Now I suppose I will be made an example of. Perhaps a public hanging? But what did it matter? Life had long ago lost all meaning and purpose anyhow. I awaited the anger and snarling command.

.....As long as I live, I will never forget that first glimpse of His face. So strong, so confident, so kind, so caring-- so compelled. In one bold move He swung His coat over my nakedness. The servants, on His command, lifted me gently into the carriage. Then everything went black.

..... The warmth woke me up. I was just being lowered into a steaming bath. Servants moved silently about, tending to the bathing and dressing my wounds. A word from the corner alerted them to my awakened state, and immediately hot tea was served. This was followed by warm soup-- and wine. Even in my near delirious state, I knew this was no ordinary wine. The bottle had a strange marking on it, like a giant t , and it read, " New Wine, minted at Calvary, A.D. 33.

..... The servants spoke quietly, to one another, or to me. There were no harsh orders or loud voices. Always, off to the side in the corner stood the Man, the Prince, with the Royal insignia on His cape.

..... I drifted off again, and awoke in a feather bed. I got up and staggered a bit, but examined myself closely. The cuts and bruises had already begun to heal. Draped over the chair was a beautiful dress. I put it on slowly, enjoying the superb feel of silk against my skin. Wow... what it must be like to live like this. And a white dress- I had always dreamed of a white dress, it was my favorite color.

.....The shoes were exquisite, black velvet with an inlaid diamond; must have cost a fortune. And the gold necklace with a single pearl was... wow. I turned around in the room and caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror. I gasped, and almost fell in my weakened state. WHO was SHE?

..... I left the room and wondered down the hallway. Several servants saw me, and bowed low. It seemed a little strange, but I went on.

..... The Great Room took me by surprise. I gasped when I walked in, at the sheer magnitude and splendor. The fact that everything in the room has suddenly stopped, with every servant standing at attention, evaded me.

..... Then I saw HIM. His eyes blazed- and I stood still as if in a daze. The Royal Insignia shone as His Kingly garments swung, His massive, masculine form moving slowly forward, His eyes never leaving my face.

..... He stopped directly in front of me. The whole world stopped. No one moved. Then slowly , He knelt in front of me, and reached out His hand, the one with the Royal Ring, and took mine. " Will you....."

..... Euphoria and exhilaration swept over me. What did He say? Who am I? What is this?

..... and my mind swirled back to the broken form lying in the mud.....

Dear Broken Heart, the King is coming. For reasons you will never understand, He has chosen You.

Maybe it is because broken hearts are so soft. Maybe it is because they love so tenaciously when they are won over. Maybe it is only because He is GOOD, and He likes to Love. Maybe it is because His Nature is so offended by the pain, and He wants to right it. I don't know. But he is coming. If you listen, you can hear the carriage around the curve.....