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THE PRINCESS BRIDE by William Goldman. © The Princess Bride Ltd. All Rights Reserved. THE YEAR that Buttercup was born, the most beautiful woman in the world was a French scullery maid named Annette. Annette worked in Paris for the Duke sact between the public sets of the Duchess est of the Duchess dest between the public sets of the Duchess and the public set of the Duchess and the public set of the Duchess and the public set of the Duchess set to work. The Palace de Guiche turned into a candy castle. Everywhere you looked, bonbons. There were piles of chocolate-covered mints in the drawing rooms, baskets of choc
THE PRINCESS BRIDE by William Goldman. © The Princess Bride Ltd. All Rights Reserved. THE YEAR that Buttercup was born, the most beautiful woman in the world was a French scullery maid named Annette. Annette worked in Paris for the Duke and Duchess de Guiche, and it did not escape the Duke's
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        eenth birthday, Buttercup realized that it had now been more than a month since any girl in the village had spoken to her. She had never much been close ugh the village or along the cart tracks. But now, for no reason, there was nothing. A quick glance away as she approached, that was all. Buttercup corn e, you'd have the courtesy not to pretend to ask" came from Cornelia. "And what have I done?" "What? What? . . . You've stolen them." With that, Cor therbrained rattleskulled clodpated dim-domed noodle-noggined sapheaded lunk-knobbed boys. How could anybody accuse her of stealing them? W I brush your horse, Buttercup?" "Thank you, but the farm boy does that." "Can I go riding with you, Buttercup?" "Thank you, but I really do enjoy my y myself, that's all." But throughout her sixteenth year, even this kind of talk gave way to stammering and flushing and, at the very best, questions as train." "Yes, I suppose it might." "You think you're too good for anybody, don't you, Buttercup?" "No, I just don't think it's going to rai about her She ignor
to girls, so the change was nothing sharp, but at least before there were head nods exchanged when she rode thro
ered Cornelia one morning at the blacksmith's and asked about the silence. "I should think, after what you've don
 nelia fled, but Buttercup understood; she knew who "them" was. The boys. The village boys. The beef-witted fea
 ny would anybody want them anyway? What good were they? All they did was pester and vex and annoy. "Can
self alone." "You think you're too good for anybody, don't you, Buttercup?" "No; no I don't. I just like riding b
out the weather. "Do you think it's going to rain, Buttercup?" "I don't think so; the sky is blue." "Well, it migh
n, that's all." At night, more often than not, they would congregate in the dark beyond her window and laugh
e farm boy handled things, emerging silently from his hovel, thrashing a few of them, sending them flying. Sh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ed them. Usually the laughter would give way to insult. She paid them no mind. If they grew too damaging, the nk him when he did this. "As you wish" was all he ever answered. When she was almost seventeen, a man i ind and, indeed, by himself he was not important. But he marked a turning point. Other men had gone out is that this was the first rich man who had bothered to do so, the first noble. And it was this man, whose
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        e never failed to tha
n a carriage came to town and watched as she rode for provisions. He was still there on her return, peering ou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     t. She paid him no m
of their way to catch sight of her; other men had even ridden twenty miles for the privilege, as this man had.

name is lost to antiquity, who mentioned Buttercup to the Count. THE LAND OF Florin was set between wher
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   The importance here
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            any would eventually settle. (This was before Europe.) In theory, it was ruled by King Lotharon and his s time in muttering. He was very old, every organ in his body had long since betrayed him, and most
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e Sweden and Germ
second wife, the Queen. But in fact, the King was barely hanging on, could only rarely tell day from night, and
of his important decisions regarding Florin had a certain arbitrary quality that bothered many of the leading cit
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     basically spent hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   izens. Prince Hum
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                perdinck actually ran things. If there had been a Europe, he would have been the most powerful man
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 nt. His last name was Rugen, but no one needed to use it—he was the only Count in the country, the Countess's parties. The Countess was considerably younger than her husband. All of her cloth
in it. Even as it was, nobody within a thousand miles wanted to mess with him. The Count was Prince Humperd
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   nck's only confida
e title having been bestowed by the Prince as a birthday present some years before, the happening taking places came from Paris (this was after Paris) and she had superb taste. (This was after taste too, but only just. And
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               naturally, at one of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             since it was such a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     new thing, and since the Countess was the only lady in all Florin to possess it, is it any wonder s
he was the leading hostess of the land?) Eventually, her passion for fabric and face paint caused her to settle
ly sleeping on silk, eating on gold and being the single most feared and admired woman in Florinese history
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     where she ran the only salon of international consequence. For now, she busied herself with simp
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      er clothes concealed them; if her face was less than divine, it was hard to tell once she got done
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        she had figure faults, h
applying substances. (This was before glamour, but if it hadn't been for ladies like the Countess, there wou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ts invention.) In sum, the Rugens were Couple of the Week in Florin, and had been for many ye
rs. . . . ... This is me. All abridging remarks and other comments will be in this fancy italic type so you'll kn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         er read this book, that's true. My father read it to me, and I just quick skimmed along, crossing
out whole sections when I did the abridging, leaving everything just as it was in the original Morgenster
kept filling the margins of the galley proofs with questions: 'How can it be before Europe but after Par
sh Dictionary.' And eventually: 'I am going crazy. What am I to make of these parentheses? When d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          usion here is because of the way Morgenstern uses parentheses. The copy editor at Harcour
pens before glamour when glamour is an ancient concept? See "glamer" in the Oxford Engl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 pter is totally intact. My intr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             rstand anything. HellIIppppp!!!' Denise, the copy editor, has done all my books since Boys a sly or he didn't. Or maybe he meant some of them seriously and some others he didn't. But happened.' That's what I think, in spite of the fact that if you read back into Florinese histor them. ... "QUICK—QUICK—COME—" Buttercup's father stood in his farmhouse, staring o "You look; you know how." Buttercup's parents did not have exactly what you might call a er a while. And a little later, again, "Ahhhh." Buttercup's mother glanced up briefly from he but so is everything. When the first man first clamber wented to know "You look; you know he was the property of the start of the property of the start of the st
                                                                                                                                                                                                                    oes this book take place? I don't unde
nd Girls Together and she had never been as emotional in the margins with me before. I couldn't
he never said which were the seriously ones. Or maybe it was just the author's way of telling the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                       e r. Either Morgenstern meant them seriou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               stylistically that 'this isn't real; it never
y, it did happen. The facts, anyway; no one can say about the actual motivations. All I can sugge ut the window. "Why?" This from the mother. She gave away nothing when it came to obedien happy marriage. All they ever dreamed of was leaving each other. Buttercup's father shrugge cooking. "Such riches," Buttercup's father said. "Glorious." Buttercup's mother hesitated, t
                                                                                                                                                                     st t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               is, if the parentheses bug you, don't rea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ather made a quick finger point. "Look—
nt back to the window. "Ahhhh," he said
                                                                                                                                                                  d an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      aft
                                                                                                                                                                  hen
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   her stew spoon down. (This was after s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                     put
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                te w,
ome on land, what he had for supper that first night was stew.) "The heart swells at the mag
ow" was all he replied. (This was their thirty-third spat of the day—this was long after spat
                                                                                                                                                                  nifi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e," Buttercup's father muttered very lou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                What exactly is it, dumpling?" Buttercup's mother wanted to know. "You look; you know h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    he was behind, thirteen to twenty, but
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 hé h ad
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                made up a lot of distance since lunch, when it was seventeen to two against him.) "Donkey
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 , tiny and awed. From setting the dinner table, Buttercup watched them. "They must be go
  the mother said, and came over to the window. A moment later she was going
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     g with him. They stood there, the tw
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  o of t hem
ng to meet Prince Humperdinck someplace," Buttercup's mother said. The father nodded
nd. The old man nodded. "Now I can die." She glanced at him. "Don't." Her tone was sur
                                                                                                                                                                    "Huntin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       That's what the Prince does." "Ho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   w lucky we
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  are to have seen them pass by," Buttercup's mother said, and she took her husband's ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       der, and probably she sensed ho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  he really was to her, because when he did die, two years further on, she went right after, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      w important
nd most of the people who knew her well agreed it was the sudden lack of opposition th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         Buttercup came close and sto
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        od behind t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                hem, staring over them, and soon she was gasping too, because the Count and Countess
and all their pages and soldiers and servants and courtiers and champions and carriage y mutt of a man who had always dreamed of living like the Count. He had once been two
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       g by the cart track at the front
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            of the farm
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  . The three stood in silence as the procession moved forward. Buttercup's father was a til
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  unting, and until this moment that had been the high point of his life. He was a terrible far
                                                                                                                                                                       miles tro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         where the Count and Prince
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              had been h
mer, and not much of a husband either. There wasn't really much in this world he excell
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e c ould never quite figure out
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ppened to sire his daughter, but he knew, deep down, that it must have been some kind o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                how he ha
f wonderful mistake, the nature of which he had no intention of investigating. Buttercup
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ny and worrying, who had always dreamed of somehow just once being popular, like the
                                                                                                                                                                         mot her
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  oman, thor
Countess was said to be. She was a terrible cook, an even more limited housekeeper. H
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      cu p slid from her womb
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   urse, beyond her. But she had been there when it happened; that was enough for her. B
uttercup herself, standing half a head over her parents, still holding the dinner dishes, sti
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          of Horse, only wishe
                                                                                                                                                                           ll sm ellir
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     d that th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e great procession wasn't quite so far away, so she could see if the Countess's clothes
really were all that lovely. As if in answer to her request, the procession turned and began
get to pay your taxes?" (This was after taxes. But everything is after taxes. Taxes were he
s farm, where now the Count and Countess and all their pages and soldiers and servants
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    cup's father managed. "My God, why?" Buttercup's mother whirled on him. "Did you for I did, they wouldn't need all that to collect them," and he gestured toward the front of hins and carriages were coming closer and closer. "What could they want to ask me about
                                                                                                                                                                              ent eri
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         'Butt er
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         Even
                                                                                                                                                                                and
t?" he said. "Go see, go see," Buttercup's mother told him. "You go. Please." "No. You. Pl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     y both went. Trembling . . . "Cows," the Count said, when they reached his golden carr
                                                                                                                                                                                 eas
age. "I would like to talk about your cows." He spoke from inside, his dark face darkened b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               adow. "My cow
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ttercup's father said. "Yes. You sée, I'm thinking of starting a little dairy of my own, an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     u." "My cows," Buttercup's father managed to repeat, hoping he was not going mad. B the village. If anyone else had had milk to sell, he would have been out of business in
d since your cows are known throughout the land as being Florin's finest, I thought I migh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            m yo
ecause the truth was, and he knew it well, he had terrible cows. For years, nothing but com
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  nts from the p
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     y had certain skills, and the complaints were quite nonexistent now—but that didn't mad you say my secret is, my dear?" he asked. "Oh, there are so many," she said—she w
a minute. Now granted, things had improved since the farm boy had come to slave for him
ke his the finest cows in Florin. Still, you didn't argue with the Count. Buttercup's father tur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 d to his wife. "W
as no dummy, no
                                                        t when it came to the quality of their livestock. "You tw
                                                                                                                                                                                            o a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   re childless, are
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ou?" th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e Count asked then. "No, sir," the mother answered. "Then let me see her," the Count
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   arents." "Butterc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          up
r t
went on—"pe
                                                               rhaps she will be quicker with her answers than her
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ather called, turning. "Come out, please." "Ho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  w did you know we had a dau
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     r. Some days I'm luckier than—" He simply
ghter?" Bu
                                                                    ttercup's mother wondered. "A guess. I assume
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               stopped talking then
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    t had to be one o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              he othe
Because
                                                                          Buttercup moved into view, hu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          om
bi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   use to her parents. The Count left the c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               the ho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  n, with black hair and black eyes and
                                                                           moved to the ground and s
                                                                                                                                   tood very
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       He wa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                g ma
                               d a black cape an
                                                                               d gloves. "Curtsy, de
                                                                                                                                  Buttercup's
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ther whispe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         re
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 uttercup did her best. And the Coun
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  t coul
                                                                                                                       stand now, she was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               wenty; her hair was uncombed, unc
                           op looking at her. Und
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     rely rated in the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 p t
                                                                                                                                                                      io
Id
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             s of baby fat. Nothing had been do
                         ge was just seventeen, so
                                                                                                                    there was still, in occas
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     al places, the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        rem
                       the child. Nothing was really t
                                                                                                                 tial. But the Count still cou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           way. "The Count would like to kno
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       not rip his e
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         yes
                                                                                                               ect, sir?" Buttercup's father s
                       secrets behind our cows' greatness, is that not corr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         nly nodded, staring. Even Butterc
w the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         oun
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       d is that the farm boy?" came a
up's
                    mother noted a certain tension in the air. "Ask the f
                                                                                                            arm boy; he tends them," Butt
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        up sai
                   ide the carriage. Then the Countess's face was fra
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              ain ted a perfect red; her green ey
                                                                                                          med in the carriage doorway. H
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                es lined in black. All the col
                                                                                                                                                                            er l
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ips w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ere p
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             p's father glanced back toward th
                 d were muted in her gown. Buttercup wanted to sh
                                                                                                         ield her eyes from the brillianc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ne figure peering around the corner of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ercu
                 use. "It is." "Bring him to me." "He is not dre
                                                                                                        ssed properly for such an occas
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                on," B
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             uttercup's mother
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  said. "I ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ve seen bare chests before," the C
the ho
                                                                                                        and pointed at the farm boy. "C
                  s replied. Then she called out: "You!
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ere." Her fingers sn apped on "here." The farm boy
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ome
                    s he was told. And when he was
                                                                                       close, the Countess left the carriage.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  n he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       was a few paces behind Bu ttercup, he stopped, head pr
                                                                          amed of his attire, worn boots and torn blue jean
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ans were invented considerably before most people suppication. "Have you a name, farm boy?" "Westley, Countess." "Well
op
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  s (bl
                                                                                                         tight together in almost a de
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 of suppl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                sture
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    m. The fabric of her gown grazed his skin. "We are all of us here pas
                                                                                                              help us with our problem
         Westley, perhaps you can
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      point of frenzy, such is our curiosity. Why, do y
  sionately interested in the sub
                                                                                                                  of cows. We are prac
ou suppose, Westley, that t
                                                   he cows of thi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      the finest in all Florin? What do you do to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    them?" "I just feed them, Countess."
Well then, there it is, the
                                              mystery is solved, the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      Clearly, the magic is in Westley's feeding. Show me how you do it, would you, Westley?" "Fee
                                          for you, Countess?" "Bright lad.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       e soon enough," and she held out her arm to him. "Lead me, Westley ..." Westley had no choic
 but to ta ke her arm. Gently. "It's behind the ho ee you in action." So off they went to the cowshed. Through
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          muddy back there. Your gown will be ruined." "I wear them only once, Westley, and I burn to s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    oun
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ept watching Buttercup. "I'll
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              help you," Buttercup called after Westley. "Perhaps I
d best see just how he does it," the Count decided. "Strange th
                                                                                                                            ings are ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           uttercup's parents said,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       and off they went too, bringing up the rear of t
                  ding trip, watching the Count, who was watching thei
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            . Who was watching Westley, "I COULDN'T
SEE what he did that was so special," Buttercup's father said. "He
                                                                                                                              just fed th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              This was after dinner
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  now, and the family was alone again. "T
hey must like him personally. I had a cat once that only bloomed whe
the stew leavings into a bowl. "Here," she said to her daughter. "Wes
wl, opened the back door. "Take it," she said. He nodded, accepted, st
                                                                                                                             n I fed him.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                М
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             aybe it's the same kin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   d of thing." Buttercup's mother scraped
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ng by t
his tree stump
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              he back door; take hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    m his dinner." Buttercup carried the bo
                                                                                                                             tley's waiti
                                                                                                                            arted off to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              to eat. "I didn't excu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      you, Farm Boy," Buttercup began. He
stopped, turned back to her. "I don't like what you're doing with Horse
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               with Horse is more to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      point. I want him cleaned. Tonight. I w
                                                                                                                             What you
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          not do ing
ant his hoofs varnished. Tonight, I want his tail plaited and his ears m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ables sp
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    otless. Now. I want him glistening, and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         is very
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        even
if it takes you all night, it takes you all night." "As you wish." She sla
                                                                                                                         mmed the d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         let him eat i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              I though
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    t Horse had been looking very well, act
ually," her father said. Buttercup said nothing. "You yourself said s
d all." "Rest, then," her mother cautioned. "Terrible things can hap
away. Buttercup went to her room. She lay on her bed. She close
                                                                                                                         o yesterday,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              her. "I mus
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  Buttercup managed. "The excitement an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         other remin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 t be overtired,
                                                                                                                      pen when you
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ur father propose
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           're ove
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          rtired. I was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             tired the night y
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                d." Thirty-four to twenty-two and pulling
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ountess was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ing at Westley. Buttercup got up from bed. She
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      took off her clothes. She washed a little
e. She got into her nightgown. She slipped between the sheets, er door. She went to the sink by the stove and poured hersel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               threw back the sheets, opened h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ountess was still staring at Westley! Buttercup
                                                                                                               snuagled down, c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           d her eyes.
                                                                                                          f a cup of water. Sh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             poured another cup and rolled its coolness across he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             r forehead. The feveris
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            e dr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ank it dow
h feeling was still there. How feverish? She felt fine. She
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             he dumped the water firmly into the sink, turned, marche
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      d back to her roo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            d n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ot even a ca
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        vity. S
                                                                                                                     her eyes. Th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ot stop staring at Westley! Why? Why in the world
m, shut the door tight, went back to bed. She closed
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ould n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         would the woma
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             m boy? Buttercup rolled around in bed. And th
n in all the history of Florin who was in all ways
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ested in t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       he far
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             as no other w
                                                                                                                       perfect be
ay of explaining that look—she
                                                                                           was interested. Buttercup s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               and studied the memory of the Counte
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              ss. Clearly, something
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 about the f
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 t her eye
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      s tight
arm boy intere
                                                                               d her. Facts were facts. But what?
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ad eyes like the sea before a stor
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             m, but who cared about eyes? And
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 The farm
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       boy h
                        blon
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              gh in the shoulders, but not all that much broader than the Count. And certa
                                                           d hair, if you liked that sort of thing. And he w
inly he was muscular, but anybody would be muscular who slaved all day. And his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       perf
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ect and tan, but that came again from slaving; in the sun all day, who wouldn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              but that was because the farm boy was younger. Buttercup sat up in bed. It must ect, particularly set against the sun-tanned face. Could it have been anything else? Butte aking deliveries, but they were idiots, they followed anything. And he always ignored then
t be tan? And he wasn't that much taller than the Count either, although his stoma
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ı was fla
be his teeth. The farm boy did have good teeth, give credit where credit was due.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             White and
rcup concentrated. The girls in the village followed the farm boy around a lot, whe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     as m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                he was, after all, exceptionally stupid. It was really very strange that a woman as beautiful
because if he'd ever opened his mouth, they would have realized that was all he ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     eeth
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          iust good t
and slender and willowy and graceful, a creature as perfectly packaged, as supremely dresse
he had it all diagnosed, deduced, clear. She closed her eyes and snuggled down and got all ni
dear." Now the farm boy was staring back at the Countess. He was feeding the cows and his m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ng u
the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               p on teeth that way. Buttercup shrugged. People were surprisingly complicated. But now s
Countess looked at the farm boy because of their teeth. "Oh," Buttercup gasped. "Oh, oh
                                                                                                                                                                              d as the Co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              untess should be h
                                                                                                                                                                   ce and comfortable, and people don't look at other people the w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     id u
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                nder his tanned skin and Buttercup was standing there watching as the farm boy looked,
                                                                                                                                                                                                           uscles we re rippling the way they alway
 or the first time, deep into the Countess's eyes. Buttercup jumped out of bed and began to pa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           er room. How could he? Oh, if
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    as a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 Il right if he looked at her, but he wasn't looking at her, he was looking at her. "She's so o
        d," Buttercup muttered, starting to storm a bit now. The Countess would never see thirty
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 oked ridiculous out in the cowshed and that was fact too. Buttercup fell onto her bed and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                          n and that was fact. And her d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   s lo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                minute she left the carriage, with her too big painted mouth and her little piggy painted eye and there have been three great cases of jealousy since David of Galilee was first afflicte rtained solely to plants, other people's cactus or ginkgoes, or, later, when there was gras time list. It was a very long and very green night. She was outside his hovel before dawn. pen books. He waitled. She looked at him. Then she looked away. He was too beautiful. "I
            ched her pillow across her breasts. The dress was ridiculous before it ever got to the her powdered skin and . . . and . . . Flailing and thrashing, Buttercup wept a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                          shed. The Countess looked r
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ossed and paced and wept so
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   mor
d with the
                        emotion when he could no longer stand the fact that his neighbor Saul's cactu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                        utshone his own. (Originally, )
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   usy
                            ch is why, even to this day, we say that someone is green with jealousy.) But
                                                                                                                                                                                                                       cup's case rated a close fourth
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  he a
s, grass, whi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   on I
                                   Id hear him already awake. She knocked. He appeared, stood in the door p said. "I know this must come as something of a surprise, since a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                        . Behind him she could see a tin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ndle
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      , 0
Inside, she cou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   y ca
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  e yo
efor
love you," Buttercu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ve ever done is scorn you and de
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   and taunt you, but I have loved you for several hours now, and every second, more. I tho
ught an hour ago that I lo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e
m
II
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   was nothing compared to what I felt then. But ten minutes after that, I understood that m
any minutes ago was I? Twenty? Had I brought my feelings up to then? It doesn't matter
ove you so much more now than twenty minutes ago that there cannot be comparison. I
                                                      ved you more than any woman has ever loved a man, but a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                   hour after that I knew that what I f
y previous love was a puddle c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  How
                                                                     ompared to the high seas before a storm. Your ey
                                                                                                                                                                                                                  like that, did you know? Well they
                                                                                                                                                                                                 es are
 Buttercup still could not look at him. Th
                                                                               e sun was rising behind her now; she coul
                                                                                                                                                                                          d feel the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                heat on her back, and it gave her co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     but you. My arms love you, my ears adore you, my knees shake with blind affection. M
Do you want me to crawl? I will crawl. I will be quiet for you or sing for you, or if you ar
love you so much more now than when you
                                                                                       opened your hovel door, there cann
                                                                                                                                                                                                              son. There is no room in my body fo
                                                                                                                                                                                    ot be compari
y mind begs you to ask it something
                                                                                              so it can obey. Do you want me
                                                                                                                                                                                                             w you for the rest of your days? I will
e hungry, let me bring you f
                                                                                                   ood, or if you have thirst an
                                                                                                                                                                                                             thing will quench it but Arabian wine,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     o Araby, even though it is across the world, and bring a bottle back for your lunch. Anyt
                                                                                                                                                                                                d no
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    do know I cannot compete with the Countess in skills or wisdom or appeal, and I saw
old and has other interests, while I am seventeen and for me there is only you. Dearest
hing there is that I can
                                                                                                      do for you, I will do for yo
                                                                                                                                                                                                           anything there is that I cannot do, I wi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     II lea
                                                                                                                                                                                                 u;
the way she loo
                                                                    ked at y
                                                                                                      ou. And I saw the way you
                                                                                                                                                                                                           ooked at her. But remember, please, t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      is
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    hat sh
Westley—I've never called you that before, have I?—Westley, Westley, Westley, Westley, ed the bravest thing she'd ever done: she looked right into his eyes. He closed the door e stumbled, she slammed into a tree trunk, fell, rose, ran on; her shoulder throbbed from
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      eet
tte
str
                                                                                                                                                                                                           Westley,—darling Westley, adored We
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      perfect Westley, whisper that I have a chance to win your love." And with that, she day
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    stley,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    word.
                                                                                                                                                                                                           in her face. Without a word. Without a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      rcup ran. She whirled and burst away and the tears came bitterly; she could not see, sh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ong, but not enough to ease her shattered heart. Back to her room she fled, back to he y," he could have said. Would it have ruined him to say "sorry"? "Too late," he cou
                                                                                                                                                                                                           where the tree trunk hit her, and the p
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ain wa
r pillow. Safe behind the locked door, she drenched the world with tears. Not even one w
                                                                                                                                                                                                          ord. He hadn't had the decency for tha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      orr
he
Id have said. Why couldn't he at least have said something? Buttercup thought very hard s it. Sure he was handsome, but dumb? The minute he had exercised his tongue, it would
                                                                                                                                                                                                           about that for a moment. And sudden
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         had the answer: he didn't talk because the minute he opened his mouth, that wa
                                                                                                                                                                                                             have all been over. "Duhhhhhhh."
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       hat he would have said. That was the kind of thing Westley came out with when
e was feeling really sharp. "Duhhhhhhh, tanks, Buttercup." Buttercup dried her tears and uick passions, you blinked, and they were gone. You forgave faults, found perfection, fe
                                                                                                                                                                                                              began to smile. She took a deep b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        heaved a sigh. It was all part of growing up. You got these li
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       am
gai
                                                                                                                                                                                                               Il madly; then the next day the sun
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       e up and it was over. Chalk it up to experience, old gi
nd get on with the morning. Buttercup stood, made her bed, changed her clothes, comb
ow much you could lie to yourself. Westley wasn't stupid. Oh, she could pretend he was
uation with a dullard. The truth was simply this: he had a head on his shoulders. With a
                                                                                                                                                                                                               ed her hair, smiled, and burst out
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       n in a fit of weeping. Because there was a limit to
                                                                                                                                                                                                              She could laugh about his difficul
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       es
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        with the language. She could chide herself f
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          or her silly infat
                                                                                                                                                                                                             in inside every bit as good as his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         h. There was a reason he hadn't spoken
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          and it had nothing to do with gray
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         tears that kept Buttercup company
cells working. He hadn't spoken because, really, there was nothing for him to say. He d
ke those that had blinded her into the tree trunk. Those were noisy and hot; they pulse
                                                                                                                                                                                                             t love her back and that was that.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               the remainder of the day were not at all li
                                                                                                                                                                                                             hese were silent and steady and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ey did was remind her that sh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        e wasn't good enough. She was seventeen, an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        h. All she knew really wa sriding, and how was that to interest a man when that ed her eyes. Another knock. "Whoever is that?" Buttercup yawned finally. "Westley. oor, unlocked it, and said, in her fanciest tone, "I'm ever so glad you stopped by, I'v
d every male she'd ever known had crumbled at her feet and it meant nothing. The one man had been looked at by the Countess? It was dusk when she heard footsteps outsi "Buttercup lounged across the bed. "Westley?" she said. "Do I know any West—oh, F e been fee ling just ever so slummy about the little joke I played on you this morning. O
                                                                                                                                                                                                             e it mattered, she wasn't good en
                                                                                                                                                                                                             r door. Then a knock. Buttercup
                                                                                                                                                                                            de he
                                                                                                                                                                                 arm Boy, it
                                                                                                                                                                                                             's you, how droll!" She went to h
                                                                                                                                                                        f course you kne
                                                                                                                                                                                                           w I wasn't for a moment serious,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            t least I thought you knew, but then, just when you started closing the door I thoug
ht for one dreary instant that perhaps I'd done my little jest a bit too convincingly and, p
                                                                                                                                                             oor dear thing, you mi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             when of course we both know the total impossibility of that ever happening." "I've? How thoughtful of you, Farm Boy, showing me that you forgive me for my little me held to the doorframe. "Now?" "Yes." "Because of what I said this morning?" "Y
                                                                                                                                                                                                            ght have thought I meant what I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         said
                                                                                                                                                              g to sleep, you mean
come to say good-by." Buttercup's heart bucked, but she still held to fancy. "You're goin
                                                                                                                                                                                                             and you've come to say good n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ght
orning's t_ease; I certainly appreciate your thoughtfulness and—" He cut her off. "I'm leaves." "I frightened you away, didn't I? I could kill my tongue." She shook her head and sho
                                                                                                                                                                                                           ving?" The floor began to ripple
                                                                                                                                                                                 g." "Lea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               r decision. Just remember this: I won't take you back when she's done with you,
                                                                                                                                                                                     her he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 "Well, it's done; you've made
don't car ັe if you beg." Hé just looked at her. Buttercup hurried on. "Just because you're
                                                                                                                                                                                       eauti
                                                                                                                                                                                                           ful and perfect, it's made you co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ed. You think people can't get tired of you, well you're wrong, they can, and she w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              after America but long after r fortunes.) "A ship sails soon from London. The self. In my hovel. I've taught myself not to need sleep. A few hour
ill, beside s you're too poor.
                                                                                                                                                                                         ica
                                                                                                                                                                                                           . To seek my fortune." (This was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          just
                                                                                            rtunity in America. I'm going to t
re is grea t oppo
                                                                                                                                                                                         ake
                                                                                                                                                                                                            advantage of it. I've been traini
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ng my
                                                         Il take a ten-hour-a-day job and then I'll take another te
                                                                                                                                                                                         n-h
                                                                                                                                                                                                          our-a-day job and I'll save every
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                y from both except what I need to eat to keep stron
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             g, and when I
s only. ľ
                              nough I'll buy a farm and build a house and make a bed big enough for t
                                                                                                                                                                                                              "You'ré just crazy if you think
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 going to be happy in some run-down farmhouse in America
                                                                                                                                                                                         wo.
            th what she spends on clothes." "Stop talking about the Countess! As a special f
uttercup shook her head. Westley shook his too. "You never have been the bright
mine would be a universe of beaches. If your love were—" "I don't understand that
n of sand and yours is this other thing? Images just confuse me so—is this univers
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           aad." Buttercup looked at him. "Don't you understand anything that's going y? Is that it?" He couldn't believe it. "Do I love you? My God, if your love were a grain o tarting to get very excited now. "Let me get this straight. Are you saying my love is the size o feeling we're on the verge of something just terribly important." "I have stayed these years in my hovel
                                                                                                                                                                                                           r. Before you drive me maaaaaa
                                                                                                                                                                                         avo
                                                                                                                                                                                         est,
                                                                                                                                                                                                             I guess." "Do you love me, Westle
                                                                                                                                                                                                               t one yet," Buttercup interrupted. She was s
                                                                                                                                                                                           al b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                  usiness of yours bigger than my sand? Help me, Westley, I have the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           e lived my life with only the prayer that some sudden dawn you might glance in my direction. I have not did not accompany me to sleep. There has not been a morning when you did not flutter behind my wa ot been—" "If you're teasing me, Westley, I'm just going to kill you." "How can you even dream I mig ove you Spell it out, should !? I ell-o h-vee-ee why-oh-you. Want it backward? You love I." "You are e you said 'Farm Boy do this' you th ought was answering 'As you wish' but that's only because you want to be the said that the sa
becau se of you. I have taught myself languages because of you. I have made my body stro
known a moment in years when the sight of you did no t send my heart careening against
                                                                                                                                                                                                                      cause I thought you might be pleased by a stro ng body. I hav
                                                                                                                                                                                             ng be
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ib cage. I have not known a night when you
r a while?" "Never stop." "There has n
                                                                                                                                                                                                    my r
king eyelids. . . . Is any of this getting through to you, Buttercup, or do you want me to go
                                                                                                                                                                                                          on fo
ht be teasing?" "Well, you haven't once said you loved me." "That's all you need? Easy. I teasing now; aren't you?" "A little maybe; I've been sayin g it so long to you, you just wo ou were hearing are "I'll love you' was an Believe, but you never heard, and you never the say of the sa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       e you. Okay? Want it louder? II
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               uldn't listen. Every tim
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 you now, and I promise you this: I will never love anyone else. Only Westley. Until I die." He nodde other step. "I'm late. I must go. I h ate it but I must. The ship sails soon and London is far." "I under
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                er heard." "I hear
                                                                                                     "Would my Westley ever lie
d, took a step away. "I'll send for you soon. Believe me
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ?" He took an
stand." He reached out with his right hand. Buttercup fo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        t hand to his. They show "Good-by," he said again. She made a kiss?" They fell into each other's arms. ... THERE HAVE BEEN fiv the precise rating of kisses is a terribly difficult thing, often leadi
                                                                                                  und it very hard to breathe.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 Good-by.'
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   She managed to raise her righ
little nod. He took a third step, not turning. She watched e great kisses since 1642 B.C., when Saul and Delilah Korn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ed out of her: "Without one
                                                                                                   him. He turned. And the wo
                                                                                                       's inadvertent discovery
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      swept across Western civilization. (Before then coup
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     les hooked thumbs.)
ng to great controv ersy, because although everyone and sy stem, there are five that everyone agrees moping and feeling sorry for herself. After all, the Westley was out in the world now, getting nearer and n
                                                                                                          agrees with th
                                                                                                                                                                                    e formula of affection ti
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         mes purity times intensity times duration, no one has ev
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        er been complete
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      atisfied with how much weight each element should receive. But o
                                                                                                                                                                                           full marks. Well, this one left them all behind. THE FIRST MORNING after Westley's
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            d eparture, B
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ercup thought she was entitled to do nothing more than sit around
                                                                                                             deserve
                                                                                                              e I
                                                                                                                                                                                            ove of her life had fled, life had no meaning, how could you face the futu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     etera, et cetera. But after about two seconds of that she realized that
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         re, et
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  n, and what if a beau
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   tiful city girl caught his fancy while she was just back here molderin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               earer to Londo
g? Or, worse, what if he got to America and worked his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                       iobs and built h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          is farm and made
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        er bed and sent for her and when she got there he would look at h
                                                                                                                                                                                                           has destroyed you
er and say, "I'm sending you back, the moping
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  r eyes, the self-
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           pity has taken your skin;
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       you're a slobby-looking cr
eature, I'm marrying an Indian girl who li
                                                                                                                                                                                                 ves in a teepee near
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             by and is alw
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ays in the peak of conditi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           on." Buttercup
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            he hurried downstairs to
ran to her bedroom mirror. "Oh,
                                                                                                                                                                                              t never disappoint
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        you," and
ere her parents were squab bling. (Sixteen to thirte
                                                                                                                                                                                                   need your
                                                                                                                         en, and not past breakfa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    advic
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    nterrupted. "What can I d
o to improve my personal appearance?" "
at it," her moth
                                                                                                                            Start by bathing," her father s
                                                                                                                                                                                                aid. "And
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         omething with your hair while you're
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ehi
rs,"
                                                                                                                        er said. "Unearth the terr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              nd your ears." "Neglect not your knees.
                                                                                                                                                                                            itory b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        Buttercup said. She shook her head. "Gr
                                                                                                            "That will do nicely for sta
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              ng tidy." Undaunted, she set to work. Eve
                                                                                                 acious, but it isn
                                                                             morning diately. T
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           if possible by dawn, and got the farm chores
                                                                                                                                      she a
         finished imme
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                to be done now, with Westley gone, and
                                                                                                                      ce th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ted, everyone in the area had incre
more than that, e
                                                                      ver sin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        e Count ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              me for self-improvement until w
ased his m
                                                             ilk ord
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   o there was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            rnoon. But then
                                                    to the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     really set to work. First a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                bath. Then, while her h air w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      as drying, she wo
                                           ood c
                                   uld
                                                                                                      slav
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           e after fixing her figure fau
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              Its (one of he
                                                                                                 r elb
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ows was j
                                                                                          ust too
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           bony
                                                                                     , the opposite
                                                                               rist not bony
                                                                    enough). And e
                                                       xercise what remai
                                             ned of her baby fat (
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       little
                                    left now; she was n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         early ei
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           nd brush h
                          ahteen). And brush a
                  er hair. Her hair was th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e color of au
           tumn, and it had never
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 been cut, so a
    thousand strokes took
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     time, but she di
dn't mind, because Wes
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         tley had never se
en it clean like this
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          and wouldn't he be
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             n she stepped off th
surprised whe
e boat in A
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                merica. Her skin was t
he colo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    r of wintry cream, and
sh
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