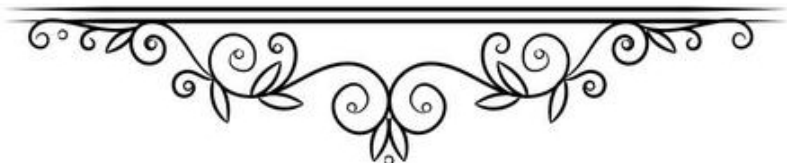




Christus, Petrus. *Portrait of a Young Woman*. Around 1470. Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.



As Pure as Porcelain



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Introduction



And it came to pass in the frozen months of Albrecht Germany, a city state in the year 1392, that a beautiful and young woman named Porcelain would be introduced to Prince Damion Von Heir who was first in line to the throne where upon sat his beloved father Lord Albert Blacienscheine.

Porcelain had only the smallest of stations in Albrecht, she being and born female and yet with a bit of compensation in that she was the only daughter to the Hess family whom by trade had managed the city finances on behalf of the king, working most competently the river ports which sided along in two equal halves the amazingly pristine, clean and efficient city Albrecht.

The city was moderate in size but with great wealth due to the multiple ships of commerce which passed by her daily and paid passage rights as was the decree of King Laschien of Ernate, the axis city state of all lands of the Germanic speaking peoples.

And so it was this winter season the Christmas ball had, as always been that which all male suitors of age and, those maidens of acceptable age, received with polite hesitation, marital offerings embellished with all the decorative festivities as they pranced around in unison and instructed by the various notes emanating from the orchestra. These young person's found their way to receiving halls and balconies strolling with debutant-like conversation, arm in arm as they had been given leave once introduced formally under the careful eye of their governesses, parents and accompanying relatives, in the acceptable norms of the time and culture of that day.

And Porcelain was of remarkable character, upright, sure, and even as some had spoken, a bit too formal, even secretive in her overall presentation of a carefully cloistered self, and yet, this was only a crafted a covering of whom she was inwardly.

For in reality the word romantic was spelled within her with a capital ‘R’ and played itself to the full in all her waking hours of observation, personal demeanor and delightful, and in ghostly dreams where gentlemen riding upon great steeds in shining armors, arriving back at the castle, a bit scared having fought with dragons and glowing with pride of victory.

And it was just with such a young woman of seventeen that on the dance floor only one year earlier as she and a partner were dancing, that Porcelain and Prince Damion Von Heir momentarily bumped into each other’s shoulder, both she and he with that slight second of embarrassment turned to see whom they had touched and, when as if by an electrical shock, there sparked a communication of destiny between them.

And of those sitting and appreciating the merriment it was Madam Alike the unofficial matchmaker and broker of marriages did indeed see and more aptly felt in her perceptive mind, that spark of connections out on the dance floor she, Madam Alike, by the evenings end would inform both sets of parents of something she was so certain.

And so this Christmas party with all the music, dancing, decorations, smiles, laughter and gifts also did acknowledge the engagement of Porcelain and her Prince and the entwinement joyfully agreed upon by both families save for a person of one only, Damion’s youngest sister, the Princess Shiriene.

Not many days of the future did Shiriene put on her black cloak with its maroon in seam and draw tight the fastening cords and placed on her coarse leather boots and walk into the still dark night to trudge thru the snow into the woods and walk the lengthy path known by very few to the slight opening where the Silver Witch lived whom procured potions and released curses and was rumored to eat live rats whole.

Chapter One

An Uncalculated Mixture



In the very still early morning of a certain year King and Queen Laschien received a wonderful gift of unimaginable value as their son, soon to be prince Damion came into the world with not a sound nor a sigh. The nurses having washed him and wrapped him in cloth handed it to his father who bore a smile so large that the tips of his manicured beard jumped up to touch the lower edge of his eye lids.

Queen Laschien, though exhausted with her nine month ordeal capped off with the intense pain any mother experiences with the birth of her first born petted the small head of Damion as her husband sat on the edge of her bed and gently bowed the child down to his mother whom as well kissed the child upon his tiny fingers and the palms of his hands and then slid back down upon her pillow to rest to sleep.

Damion was followed in birth by his sister of three years younger Shiriene and then against the doctor's wishes due to Queen Laschien's age, she tried birthing yet a third child to be named Tamilien Tae if he were a son but alas that which was indeed born boy, child and the Queen mother perished due to complications.

At this time Prince Damion was of the age seventeen, well-educated as all young men in valor in honor and growing still in grace and compassion and who was absolutely worshiped by Shiriene

The passing of the Queen and her still born was of immense grief to all the cities' Albretch populace as the Queen had provided much charitable workings side by side with the doctors and nurses in the dispensaries, bandaging the cripple, feeding those ill with fever and altogether made great effort to help the poor to advance their state of living.

And days following the burial as the king did grieve the loss, it was instructed of her brother that she, Sarinian should not show any outward sorrow so as not to be a burden to their father.

Damion in his role as the older, protective brother, would take his Sarinian on long walks thru the forests and to the free flowing mineral baths and waterfalls of their proud land, all the time instructing her and assuring her that somehow God would make all things well for their family and that she would continue to grow to be as her mother, charitable and wise and that she would be in her own right a remarkable princess who all the people would make fine assessment of.

And of these times Sarinian grew more fond of her brother and it may be said to an unhealthy level of anxious anxiety believing that she could never hope to have a man to marry such as Damion, thus proposing in her heart that herself and her brother were in all sense married.

And upon one of their walks for which Sarinian had as before prepared a basket of food and placed in a wonderful fruited mixture of wine, she set before her brother the blanket and bid him to sit as she spread out the foods and drink and then set herself, they enjoying fine, amiable weather in a gentle clearing of verdant green grass and listened with delight the slight murmurings of the river as it percolated with plops of waters upon the smooth stones making a music that mimicked the sound of the lute.

“My brother,” said Sarinian “I have made this lunch special.”

“Like all your meals Sarinian,” complimented Damion as he sipped upon his cup of wine.

“Thank you, brother,” said Sarinian with sincerity and yet with a hesitant tone of voice.

And as Sarinian whose head was nestling close upon her own breast trying to gain the courage to speak, Damion put his arm out and with his hand lifted Sarinian’s chin so that their eyes met in a way they never had. “You wish to tell me something from your heart my sister, and I am here to listen.”

But instead of speaking Sarinian placed her hand into the pocket of her blouse and lifted out a locket on a chain. Damion seeing the locket said, “Our mother’s cameo.”

“Yes,” said Sarinian carefully. “I want to know if you would agree upon wearing one half the locket. And the other half I shall wear. I want this to represent something for togetherness; a bonding between us.”

“But Sarinian,” said Damion “we are brother and sister; that is a life bondage which nothing could ever break.”

Sarinian’s eyes moistened and a tear, like a loosened diamond trickled down an uncharted path upon her cheek.

“And you cry. You cry because you miss our mother. But she as you and I and father as well, will never not be bonded together; forever we will be.”

“And just the same” said Sarinian wiping the tear droplet away “I would like this cameo father gave as a pledge to mother on their wedding day and which she never once removed, to be something for us both to share. A symbol; a physical pledge.”

The day gave way to a long conversation and both Sarinian and Damion whom had drunk all the portion of wine and who had become tired lay down his head in his sister’s lap waking hours later his clothes a bit disheveled his body feeling a bit stiff and yet relaxed in a way he had never felt before.

As brother and sister walked home and talked further of the cameo Damion did give into Sariana’s wish and agreed that the blacksmith would be consulted as to how best to cut the locket in the most precise way and then with two fine silver necklaces attach both halves, symbols that would be the noticeable physical pledge Sarinian had devised.

Chapter Two

Setting the Stage



The curious, forthright person Porcelain had grown to become now eighteen a remarkable age for the time as the rate of death among young persons mimicked the rate the sun rises and then does in its few hours of proclamation dip to the horizon and thus disappears altogether.

And thus it is for our story, Porcelain is well groomed and had been taught in the ways of being a fine lady, and as we have said before, an only daughter of a wealthy merchant family, she does now indeed command a certain respect betrothed to the heir apparent of the Albretch throne.

Porcelain was seen by the community at large to be quite a fortune of grandeur for of her eyes her resplendent beauty was doubly emphasized by her chocolate black hair, full, silky and lush, her skin, if you will: porcelain in hue and radiant, and emerald green eyes that shone as two perfect gemstones.

And of her personality, thus to emphasize the more, her intrigues of conversation, brilliant mind, observational skills, categorizing and thus evaluating any and all movements both physical and physiological of every person and all persons; it would be enough to say, if all truths were come to the table as rumors would come as blossoms to a rose bush, indeed, she, Porcelain should be ideal for the throne of Queen when time would open to destiny.

Part II

Thus have we set forth upon mutual agreement that Porcelain will be the so called protagonist of our story and, not to let the dragon out of the bag so to speak, Porcelain will be the one to be accused of cold, heartless murder, that being, the one person she had been betrothed to and would marry, he, her husband intended, Prince Damion.

To be completed Dec 2020!