

GOLDEN THREAD, SILVER KNIFE

**FROM MYSTICAL TIDES
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RENWULF CREATIONS

Writing that enlivens your heart, mind and soul

GOLDEN THREAD, SILVER KNIFE

No one heard the sobbing of the princess, or rather everyone heard, but there was no one to speak of it. You see, who was there to speak of such things? In a kingdom of no king and in which the queen was as yet uncrowned.

The knight rode in, as knights are wont to do, on a tall steed and with words like golden thread. Golden threads that danced and spun around the young princess. Binding her in garments of shimmering light, warming light, blinding light.

The uncrowned queen, having no authority in this kingdom, cast the princess away and into the waiting arms of her knight.

Sleeping in the beauty of a few passing years, the golden threads wound so tight around her. Wound into and all around her mothering of a small child within the night world of her womb.

The golden threads, ever tightening, ever pressing firmer, their bright light slashing – words, words, and more words. Questions and the claims of the debt to be paid.

“I have given you gold. I have given you gold.”

And something else in whispers, almost unheard. The golden threads were crying, “I am the giver of gold.”

And, while yet in the night world the child slept, the golden threads materialised. From emotion, they were born into action. From promises, they were born as the strike.

And onwards, the golden threads spun further into the princess’s body, into her heart, into her mind’s waking thoughts, into the shadow corners of her dreams. They spun and spun and spun until, one day, they had completely re-woven the princess. The knight had never before felt as splendid as he did on this day when he knew what the threads had done.

Yet still, the princess dreamt, with the threads only in the shadows. They could not find a way to stop this, the knight and the threads. They broke her sleep, they made her afraid to rest, they waited for the moment when her cares were let go to startle and accuse her again.

But eventually, inevitably, she would sleep – and in sleeping, she would dream. And the dreams seemed to exist in another place, a place where the knight was not a knight at all and where the princess was not even a princess.

Thus, with each new day, the threads were required to weave again. They could not rest on the work of yesterday, not when she dreamt as she did. No, they must weave again: weave anew her body, weave anew her beating heart, her breathing lungs, her throat to speak, her eyes to see. Weave anew her thoughts – most determinedly, they must weave her thoughts. Loud thoughts, demanding thoughts. So loud that a person may quite easily not hear the quieter voice or the silent knowing within.

So the quieter voice stopped, and the silent knowing waited, waited for her dreams. For every time she slept, she dreamt. And in all of her dreams, the queen held her arms around the princess until all other sounds ceased. Then the queen would speak, in a voice both gentle and firm, of all the things which waited to awaken within the princess. And as the princess listened, she felt a deep pool within her ripple and swell. A deep pool of silence edging upon its banks. She imagined the child asleep – as though a traveller upon the sea – waiting to reach the land.

And even though the threads – on every waking morning – spun the queen’s words from her thoughts, the princess could yet feel the ghost of the queen’s firm and gentle voice caress her mind.

And the golden threads, reaching as they did into the shadow corners of these dreams, caught hold of echoes. And these, they whispered to the knight. Whispered them as he caressed the body of the princess. And the knight saw he had reason to doubt the gold, to doubt the years of careful binding. He reached into the weaving, entwining threads – tore them from her body, tore them from his own.

And the knight then took another instrument: the knife which is not gold but is silver. Silver that shines with a light which cannot but betray itself in its revealing of the truth. Too clear, too bright. A silver which does not warm, which holds no pleasure in a warm and golden heat. The silver knife shone bright and clear and cold.

And everyone heard the sobbing of the princess, but they all thought different things. So who was there to speak of it?

In a kingdom of no king and in which the queen was as yet uncrowned.

So the princess waited. The wound still fresh, unhealed, she waited. Waited for the knight to sleep, to hesitate, to glance the other way. Her waiting's reward – one moment. And in that moment, she ran.

She ran to the queen – and the old kingdom opened its doors and allowed her in. And the princess looked closely at her mother and watched her over days and nights so safe they felt like freedom. And in watching closely, the princess saw her mother was not the queen who had come to her in her dreams. Was not the queen who knew of the deep pool within her– or if knowing, would not speak of it, would not hear of it.

And now, when the princess dreamt, she no longer dreamt of the queen. And with each day, she felt the memory fade from her. So the princess fled. No knight, no queen, there were no arms to take her. She left only to wander along the very outskirts of the kingdom, to all the unwatched and unlooked for corners of the realm.

And who was there to see the tears of the princess? On the edges of the kingdom, in the shadow corners of the realm. The princess searched, and when night came, she dreamt of nothing and of no one.

She followed the echoes of her footsteps, around and around, seemingly in circles. But one morning, she wandered unto the edges of a wide and calm pool. As she stared into the depths, a voice called out behind her.

“Take this,” said the voice.

The princess turned and saw a woman holding up the bright, silver blade of a knife.

The princess fell onto her knees.

“It will not harm you,” said the woman, “if you know how to use it. It is the match to these.”

And the woman drew from her pockets long threads of gold.

“These are yours, as much as they are anyone’s.”

The princess shook her head and buried her face in her hands.

“Why have you need of tears?” continued the woman plainly. “Is the pool empty?”

She continued to pull from her pockets the threads, until they were a mass of tangles that the woman pressed into the princess’s hands.

“But you must also take this.”

And the woman held up again the silver knife. She placed it upon the ground beside the crouching princess.

The woman shrugged and gestured to the pool. “The river of life will always flow. There is no one who can stop it.”

The woman stood up straight and folded her arms lightly. “Justice and love and the river of life. If I might, I would like to see you begin.”

The princess picked up the threads, and she picked up the knife. She seated herself comfortably at the edge of the pool and began to weave.

She wove and wove: a cloak, a pair of shoes, blankets, a dress. Cutting and shaping as she went: the gold with the silver, the

threads with the knife. Until she went so far as to weave a golden carpet, the walls and high ceiling of a billowing tent.

She remembered the woman, and still weaving, she looked up. The woman was not there – how long she had been gone, the princess did not know. For in looking around herself, she saw that her life had travelled along days and weeks, travelled across the journeys of years. She looked up and saw that her child was now grown and onwards weaving her own path of silver and of gold.

The princess was yet at the banks of the pool, seated in a garden of vital beauty. She felt the sun softly warming her skin and crowning the world in its golden light.

And she felt once more the presence of the wise and noble queen who had visited her dreams so many years ago. She felt the queen's graceful strength all around her and reaching out from deep within her body and her mind. Though there was no one in the garden with her, though she was the only one.