

FAIRY TALES

PRESENZIA

Bontanical Garden Sofia

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Rosa

I still remember the thirst of that summer.

The earth was hard as stone, and the streams flowing down from the mountains had turned into streaks of cracked mud.

In the village, no one laughed anymore. The elders looked up at the sky every evening, hoping for rain, but above us there were only light clouds that the wind blew away too quickly.

I lived at the foot of the mountains, in a small wooden house surrounded by now-dry fields.

I had kept a single jug of water, hidden in the coolest shadow of the room.

It was all I had left to survive a few more days.

One evening, as the sun was disappearing behind the peaks, I heard a knock on the door.

In front of me, I found an old woman wrapped in a gray cloak.

Her feet were covered in dust, and her eyes seemed as ancient as the mountains.

«I'm thirsty,» she said to me in a weak voice.

I hesitated. I could feel the weight of the jug behind me, the value of every single drop.

Many people in the village would have closed the door. But something in that woman's gaze prevented me from turning around.

I took the jug and handed it to her.

She drank slowly, as if savoring not only the water but also the very act of sharing.

When she finished, she smiled at me.

And in that instant, the wind changed.

The shadows around the house began to shift lightly.

The old woman's cloak rose like mist, and I saw a faint light shine between her wrinkled hands.

I understood then that she was no ordinary woman.

Ancient tales spoke of mountain fairies, guardian spirits of forests and hidden springs.

They said they appeared to men only in times of great need.

The old woman opened her hand and let a few bright pink petals fly into the wind.

The petals danced in the evening air, rising toward the arid hills.

«Where kindness exists, the earth will always remember how to bloom,» he whispered.

Then he disappeared.

That night, the wind perfumed the air like I had never smelled before.

In the morning, thousands of pink flowers bloomed on the dry slopes of the valley, accompanied by healing and thirst-quenching rain.

Their scent filled every street, every field, every breath.

Catharanthus

*In the heart of a silent garden, where the wind slowly brushed the leaves
and the sunset sky tinted copper and purple, was growing a small Catharanthus with pink petals.
It lived close to the earth, discreet and quiet, like a creature accustomed to keeping secrets.
As the sun disappeared behind the trees, an ancient Voice rose from the garden.
It seemed to be born from the wind itself, from the breathing of the roots and the memory of the rain.
«Little flower,» it said softly, «who are you, shining so silently at the edge of the path?»
The flower trembled slightly in the evening breeze.
«I am a humble presence,» it replied. «Many look at me without truly knowing me.
They see my colors, but not the knowledge hidden within my leaves.»
The Voice remained listening.
«Inside me,» the flower continued, «nature has preserved a rare gift.
The ancient healers harvested me at dawn, when the dew still glistened on the leaves.
They knew the bitterness of my sap and used it to calm fevers and ease suffering.*

*The night slowly advanced, and the first stars appeared in the sky.
«Then,» the Catharanthus continued, «scientists have started observing my deepest secrets.
They discovered invisible substances capable of aiding the body in the fight against certain
blood diseases and tumors.»
The Voice pronounced those difficult names as if they were sacred words.
«Vincristine... vinblastine...»
The little flower seemed to gather the starlight on its petals.
«They are not magic,» it explained calmly. «They are fragments of the balance of life.
They help lost cells stop their disordered course.
They remind the body of the forgotten rhythm of harmony.»
For a long moment, the garden remained still.
Then the Voice asked, «How is it possible that such a fragile creature holds such great strength?»
The flower replied softly,
«Fragility often hides true power.*

Sterlitzia

In the lands where the sun slowly sinks into the ocean and the air smells of salt and rain, there lived a bird that no one could hold back. Men called it the Bird of Paradise, and it appeared only at dawn, when the world was still suspended between dream and reality.

It had bright orange wings and blue feathers as deep as the sea before a storm. It flew high above noisy cities, silent forests, and endless deserts, never truly belonging anywhere. Yet, wherever it passed, it left something behind: the courage to set out again, the strength to change, the desire to continue the journey even when the heart was tired.

I imagine it was born from the wind.

As time passed, the bird saw the world change. Cities grew immense, men stopped looking at the stars, and noise drowned out the voice of nature. No one raised their eyes to the sky anymore. No one seemed to notice its presence.

Thus, one copper-colored evening, the bird landed on the earth and slowly closed its wings.

He asked only one thing: not to be forgotten.

The Earth, which hears everything humans no longer hear, granted his wish.

She transformed him into an extraordinary flower, capable of forever preserving the memory of flight.

His petals became wings stretched toward the sun, his heart retained the colors of the sky and the sunset, and his shape forever recalled a bird ready to depart.

Plumbago

I still remember the day I saw the first Plumbago tree born.

The village elders said no man should witness that event, because it was a secret guarded by the heavens themselves. Yet there I was, young and curious, sitting among the red rocks while the wind carried the scent of rain.

It was the season of great storms. For days, dark clouds had covered the sun, and the animals were silent as if waiting for something sacred thing happening soon.

That evening, the sky seemed alive: blue flashes crossed the horizon, and thunder shook the earth beneath my feet.

Then it happened. A huge bolt of lightning tore through the clouds and struck the hill in front of the village. For an instant, I saw the sky open like torn fabric. A blue light, brighter than river water and clearer than children's eyes, slowly fell toward the ground, spreading through the dust and dry grass.

I was afraid, but I couldn't run away.

The rain began to fall gently, warm as a mother's hands. When the storm subsided and silence returned to the savannah, I approached the hill with a pounding heart. Where the lightning had struck, I found neither ash nor fire.

I found small blue flowers I had never seen before.

They looked like fragments of sky trapped on the earth.

Sage / Salvia

*There is an ancient word that has spanned the centuries like the wind through summer fields.
It is a word that wise old women whispered in hushed tones, beside the fire or in the silent gardens of monasteries. From that word came the name Sage, a plant revered not only for its virtues, but also for the mystery hidden within its scent.*

The ancients said that the name «Sage» was linked to wisdom, to the ability to see beyond fears and listen to the hidden language of nature.

For this reason, it was called the herb of the wise.

Its silvery leaves were considered small guardians of the world's memory, and those who gathered them had to do so with a quiet mind and a sincere heart.

It was said that the ancient healers climbed the hills at dawn, when the earth still breathed the freshness of the night.

They walked in silence, because they believed that sage spoke only to those who knew how to listen.

Its leaves were touched slowly, as if touching something sacred, and their intense scent accompanied the prayers addressed to nature.

At homes, sage burned in braziers during the evenings.

Its smoke drifted through the rooms like a light mist, bringing calm to restless thoughts and clarity to tired minds.

The elders said that simply sitting beside its scent was enough to regain balance and better understand oneself.

Thus the name of sage endured through time, bringing with it an invisible yet precious gift: the wisdom of those who know how to listen to nature and learn from its eternal calm.

Lavender

*In the silence of a purple hill, where the late afternoon sun slowly warmed the earth and bees danced in the golden air, was growing Lavandula.
Its flowers swayed in the wind like small blue fires, and their scent filled the air with calm.
It was then that the ancient Voice spoke.*

«Lavender,» said the Voice, «why have men sought you for so long?»

The plant let its scent drift in the wind before answering.

«Because I remind them of something they have forgotten: rest.»

The field remained still, as if listening.

«For centuries,» continued the lavender, «men have gathered my flowers to calm their agitated hearts and racing thoughts.

My scent accompanies sleep, releases tension, and helps the body find peace.»

The lavender continued:

Many keep me near their bed, because my aroma helps the mind slow down and the breathing deepen.»

A breeze blew across the purple field, wafting a clean, ancient scent.

«And yet,» said the Voice, «people today live more restlessly than ever.»

The lavender seemed to bend gently in the wind.

«Because they have forgotten the natural rhythm of things.

They sleep without rest, breathe without listening to their breath, live without stopping.

I don't just heal the body. I remind people that peace is a cure.»

The Voice was silent for a moment.

Then he asked:

«What is your greatest gift?»

The lavender replied softly:

«To remind humans that gentleness is a strength.

That slowing down is not wasting time.

Sometimes healing begins simply by breathing more slowly.»