Full Moon Dancing

A small blue bird sat high in the tree tops, staring down at the road below. The path was worn and dusty – the type of path where the dust never has long to settle. The trees above it formed the arcing ceiling of a cathedral, but to what god or goddess, only the forest itself knew. All but the trees themselves had lost that part of their ancient history and even for them it grew hazy. The falling sun shone down through the branches, casting light and shadows that played upon the leaves and forest floor with sighing, sweeping delight.

Suddenly the small bird took off, flapping its wings as it gave way to its surprise and hidden instinct to flee before all it did not know. Soon after its departure, that never-settling dust rose again, but now for the wheels of an intricate carriage, seemingly pulled by nothing at all. It was small, but sturdily made, and as round as the moon that was silently coming out of hiding among its brethren of stars. Its whiteness was hidden by the myriad of flowers that adorned its outside, weaving in and out in garlands of fine petals and bouncing leaves. Rose buds snuggled up to daffodils, which rubbed petals with even the most stately of lilies. Ivy intertwined itself among the forget me knots, and shared precious space with orchids and queen anne’s lace. No one tried to get too close to the thistle flowers, but with so little room, the magnolias figured someone had to! On it went, lazily down the path, jostling the few fairies who had decided to hitch a ride upon this most unusual vehicle. Only a little bigger than some of the flowers they made their tiny clothes from, their high trilling voices sang out among the blossoms and blooms.

When at last the flower bedecked craft stopped, seemingly in the middle of nowhere special, the sun was sighing its last coppery sigh, releasing the world to a sky encompassed by myriads of stars. They
shone down their cold immortal light as a small door opened with an audible click and a slender foot emerged encased in a silky white dancing slipper. Soon the rest of her emerged, showing a young haremaid clothed in a rich, soft light blue and white dress. The hem swept the fallen leaves on the forest floor as she stepped lightly down upon the ground. Hazel eyes looked about the forest before her, searching... searching....ah!

He came, dressed in an elegant vest and suit complete with coat tails and a top hat, the latter of which he gallantly swept off as he gave an elegant bow. This she returned to the gentleman hare with a curtsy of her own before taking his proffered arm and leading her down and off the path. There he revealed a world quite different from the one they were leaving, beyond those thin branches and fern fronds that grew along the far side of the path.

It was a merry chaos that reigned below, as other creatures milled about to the sound of music. They came in every size and species, each dancing in harmony together under that great mysterious orb of the full moon. Among the plethora of creatures, hedgehogs swayed as a pair of herons did a prancing line dance. A lynx sinuously danced with her partner, a young buck with a crisp bow tie. Two raccoons danced a tango, her in a voluptuous red dress cut daringly low, he in a smart tux. Each of their masked faces were grinning. Wise and be-speckled owls soared above amidst a swarm of sparrows and chickadees, each twittering along to a melody only they really knew. The fairies from the carriage winged about, adding to the confusion of the air. Each carefully avoided the glowing lanterns and merrily sparkling fairy lights that adorned the trees and stretched across the dancing sword on vines stretched taunt by their glowing burdens. A long snake had wrapped himself around a high tree branch and nodded to the tune, his eyes reflecting a blue light just above him.

And the music! Was there ever such a blessed melody? The
quartet of old grizzly bears, each wearing their finest, strummed and hummed, fiddled and sang until the notes rose up to make even the stars twinkle a little brighter with their song. It drifted through the tree tops and made your bones hum as it urged even the least sure-footed creature to the dance floor just to revel in its melody.

Amidst all of this did the two hares find each other jostled to the dance floor in each other's arms. She blushed, warm color rising to her small pale brown face as he took her paw in his. He smiled, his happiness sparkling in his eyes and reflected back into hers.

And then they were floating, dancing across the floor as if nothing but those two had ever existed, would ever exist....

How long did they dance, swaying to the beat not set by that perfect soaring music, but by the beat of their own hearts? How long did they stare into each other's eyes, lost in their secret depths? Who can know?

Yet when the sun began to break across the horizon once more and the revelers were finally broken from their dream of the night's music, it was with the heaviest of hearts did the young couple part. With lingering touch did the young and gallant hare lead the maid to her carriage and help her inside. They looked at each other, one last time hazel eyes meeting hazel.

And then she was gone.

He stood there in dismay as he fought himself not to chase after. Every cell seemed to urge him to move, to run, to do anything that would bring him closer with the maid that was slowly disappearing from sight.

A whole cycle of the moon was an eternity to wait.

Before he knew what he was doing, before he even had time to take a breath he was running, his foot paws drumming the ground to the rhythm of his labored breath and heart. Yes....there it was! It was
just about to turn the corner. His top hat was soon lost to the wind as, with one great effort he put on a great burst of speed.

Drawing next to the carriage as it pulled to a stop, he panted for breath. Then, suddenly, the door to the carriage flew open once more, and with it flew the hare maid, right into his arms. It was as if they had never been apart, and they both knew that from then on they never would be. Dawn rose, tinged with gold and peach hued fingers over the tree tops, and with it, the beginning of a new day.

By Jenna Hiltsley