

THE BALLAD OF THE SOLITARY ROSE

The reason for this sorrow, lest I shall forget
Has more in common with desire than loss of innocence
Friend refill my empty glass and I'll tell the tale
Of turquoise waters tempting men to hoist naïve sails
With a promise of enrapture in romantic minds
And a course set for a heaven no sexton could find

I met a fine fellow, his will all but frayed
Yet the grace of a diver his manner did show
He unraveled his reasons and cause for dismay
Praising the poison he'd come to know
Each falling tear, each display of emotion
Rekindled his grief with a pledge of devotion

He sipped his drink to soothe a wound which would not heal nor close
And sang to me his ballad of the solitary rose

"Oh, the sea was once my friend but this was long ago
Long before the winds of change softly began to blow
I drifted with a stringent current in search of sacred land
Only to wake upon a reef of broken hearted men
I have one solitary love, more beauty than a dove
With the strength of an eagle soaring the sky above
There's no caress so gentle, no smile so kind
As the comfort she bestows when I gaze in her eyes
She'll seduce your passion while her mind you adore
And by the time you've set sail, tears flow through your port
No malice shall find her, no bitterness you
Only the desire to fulfill what you cannot undo
Still waters run forever when there's no possession
And gifted is the tender flower with subtle affliction
She'll always be with me, long after the winds have blown
For she is perfection, this solitary rose"

He offered me his withered smile and quivering refrain
Proposed our toast from a snifter brimmed with Grand Marnier
"To my broken heart, the love which I confess
And the many sleepless nights when sorrow shares my bed"
He spoke with great conviction of a beauty near divine
I deferred to temptation, sought to make her mine

This flower could not be found in the garden of my past
Nor could I perceive her slipping from the promise of my grasp
Through the evening of loneliness I held not this special flower
Tempting emotion in many hearts while mine refused to cower
Until adrift I lay like moonlight on the ocean
And found my heart melt in an embrace of pure emotion

She soothed me with a feeling I'd no strength to oppose
For its true I'd fallen for the solitary rose

The days we shared were few, less than a summer season
And though she left my soul intact, I lost all sense of reason
Like the tide which crawls in vain for the comfort of the shore
So my heart would grow to miss the comfort of the rose
And comfort is something I rarely find
In bottles of whisky and tumblers of rye

I cannot deny this emotion, for it is the wound I chose
So I sing to you my ballad of the solitary rose

The sea was once my friend, but oh, so long ago
Long before the wind of change swept in a virgin snow
I drifted with the current through straits of foolish men
Only to wake a shattered heart as I lay upon the sand
I have but one single love, more beauty than a dove
With the grace of an eagle soaring the sky above
There's no caress so gentle, no smile so kind
As the comfort she bestowed in such little time
She'll entice desire while her mind you adore
And by the time you've set sail tears flow through your port
No malice will find her, no bitterness you
Only the wish to fulfill what you cannot undo
Waters run forever deep where ripples no possession
And gifted is the tender flower with subtle affliction
She'll always be with me, long after stars cease to glow
For she is perfection, my solitary rose

I offer you a withered smile of reluctance and of truth
Raise my glass in a toast of whisky and vermouth
Here's to my broken heart, the tears I've yet to shed
To the many sleepless nights when sorrow shares my bed
And as I sipped to soothe a wound which would not heal nor close
My young friend set sail for the Isle of the Solitary Rose

- Grayford '89