

Sweet Dreams

by Jack Swenson

Lovers Over Paris

The redhead dances and plays the tambourine. The pale brunette holds out her hands to accept flowers from the clown. The brunette is a comely wench, a bare back rider, a star of the center ring. But tonight the circus is dark. She is free to go to her lover, to embrace, to float in the night sky.

The young man blushes with joy and throws up one hand, prepares to woo, to dance. Below the redheaded companion's feet is a bridge joining left bank and right. She is wearing red shoes.

In a narrow lane, a man, a poor expatriate artist, is out for a midnight stroll. He has been drinking wine. He makes mental notes as he watches the tableaux unfolding in the bright blue sky. He gazes at the sweet trio with hungry eyes.

La Mariee

My bride wore a red dress with a white veil. We seemed to float in air. The preacher asked me a question, and I said "I do." In the street below, a man in a cap and knickers played some kind of a flute. A goat carried a bass fiddle. We floated away; to where? To Heaven or Hell. To Never-Never Land. A lobster holding a candle lit the way. The sky was blue; the groom—*que ce serait moi*—shimmered in the moonlight. I adjusted my lady's veil. Her eyes and hair were the color of coal dust. She carried a bouquet of flowers, white like her gossamer veil, virginal, pure, unsullied. I was neither happy nor sad. I looked at her as we drifted away, in my eyes an unspoken question.

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