

Summer Rain

Tap.

Molly Prewett blinked sleepily, a noise having awoken her, before she rolled over and closed her eyes.

Tap. Tap.

Not a minute later, there it was again, a sharp tap on the glass of her window. Groaning, she pulled back her bed covers, and swung her legs over the side. As her bare feet hit the cold wooden floor, she shivered slightly.

Tap. Tap. Tap.

She hurried over to her window, and peered out. She smiled as she saw the shadowy outline of a young man, crouched behind a bush. He'd been throwing small pebbles at the window, to attract her attention.

Quietly, she lifted the latch on the window casing, and swung it open, feeling the chill of the early morning air on her face.

"I'll be down in ten minutes," she called softly, hoping that he would be able to hear her, "go and wait in the lane."

When he didn't move, she pointed at him, then at the lane that ran alongside the garden. Seeming to understand, he gave her the thumbs up, picked up what looked like a basket, and moved silently out of the garden.

Molly shut the window, and turned back to her room with a smile on her face. And then, as if galvanized by the thought of a day alone with him, she moved through her morning routine in a matter of minutes.

Having decided on a light cotton summer dress in pale yellow, she pulled her brush through her auburn hair and slipped her feet into a pair of sandals. She glanced out of the window, and noticed that in the time it had taken her to wash and dress, the sun had risen, and the early morning half-light she had last seen, was being replaced by bright sunshine and a startlingly blue sky.

Smiling to herself, she knew that the day was going to be a good one, and then her smile became a frown, as she realised it would perhaps be the last they'd be able to spend together. Her parents didn't approve of him, her Mother especially. She said he was 'not the right sort' and 'just wouldn't do'.

She sighed, pushing thoughts of her parents out of her head, and opened her bedroom door, wincing as one of the hinges creaked. It was still early, barely six o' clock, and so she hoped her Mother and Father were still asleep.

She tiptoed down the hall, pausing at the top of the stairs, listening for any sound of her parents or her brothers, and satisfied when she heard nothing, hurried down the

stairs. She had almost made it to the front door, when a voice from behind stopped her.

“Margaret Prewett, you’d better not be sneaking out to see that boy!”

She sighed, and turned to face her Mother. Frances Prewett was an imposing figure, despite being short and slim, with a dainty face and hard expression.

“And what if I am?” Molly replied.

“I won’t allow you to, Margaret. That boy’s a bad influence on you. You’re not to see him.”

“The only reason you don’t like him is because his family don’t have much money! I’m in love with him, Mother, and I *am* going to see him today. There’s nothing you can do to stop me,” she turned, and started to open the door, before turning back to the shocked face of her Mother, “and don’t call me Margaret. It’s Molly.”

She strode from the house, shaking slightly, wanting to get away as quickly as possible. Nearly slamming the garden gate behind her, she hurried around the corner and walked into the very person she had been arguing about moments before.

“Arthur!” She pulled him into a hug, startling him slightly, but he allowed her to hold him close, wrapping his arms around her waist.

“Are you all right?” He asked, when she’d pulled away. He picked up his basket in one hand, and took Molly’s hand in the other.

“I’ll be fine,” she replied, smiling up at him, “it’s just my Mother again. You know how she gets.”

Arthur smiled grimly. “I wish there was something I could do to change her mind about me.”

“She’ll come around eventually,” Molly replied, “part of it is because she thinks this is just a teenage romance. She doesn’t think it’ll last.”

“Ah well,” Arthur said, squeezing her hand, “she’ll live to eat her words.”

“Yes,” Molly smiled, and began to feel a little happier. She was not going to let her Mother ruin the day, and firmly pushed all thoughts of her out of her mind.

Laughing, she let go of Arthur’s hand, and ran ahead slightly, revelling in the early morning hush, the only sounds the faint crowing of a cockerel in the distance and the chirruping of birds in the hedgerow.

“Here?”

“No, if the sun gets too hot we want to be near a tree for shade.” Molly paused, her hands on her hips, looking around the wide expanse of grass. “Over there will do,” she said, pointing in the direction of an oak tree, “and we’ll be near the stream too.”

Moments later, Arthur was smoothing down the edges of the picnic blanket, glad that he’d thought to cast an impervius charm on the underside before leaving his house, as the grass still held drops of dew on their slender stems.

“If the lady would care to have a seat,” he bowed low in jest, sweeping his arms through the air, gesturing at the blanket.

Molly giggled. “The lady would.” She sat down, carefully tucking her skirt beneath her legs, and leaned backwards, until she was resting on her elbows.

Arthur had sat down beside her, and was in the process of removing something from his basket. Molly gazed up at the deep blue of the sky, not a cloud in sight, and sighed in contentment. Her eyes followed the path of a small bird, diving and soaring through the air, swooping low before climbing high again.

She thought that if she could stay in that moment forever, if she could freeze time and be in this place always with Arthur, never having to worry about her parents, or her exam results or anything, ever again, she would be happy.

She was awoken from her daydream when Arthur asked if she was hungry. And as soon as he’d asked, she felt her stomach growling.

“Now that you mention it, I am rather hungry. What have you got?”

“Your favourite,” he smiled, “my Mum made them last night, when I told her I was taking you out for the day.”

“Currant buns?”

“Yep,” Arthur replied, “and blackcurrant jam, home made of course.”

“Have I ever told you how much I love you?” Molly said, as she took one of the currant buns from the paper they were wrapped in.

“Just once or twice,” Arthur replied teasingly, before taking one of the buns for himself.

The morning hours passed fairly quickly, the sun rising ever higher in the sky. Bouts of comfortable silence followed long minutes of talking, sometimes kissing, as they lay on the tartan picnic blanket, listening to the trickling of the stream.

By noon, the sun had reached its highest point in the sky, its rays beating down fiercely, and Molly began to wish she’d thought to bring her swimsuit. The clear waters of the stream had never looked more inviting.

“It’s so hot,” she said, sitting up slightly and shielding her eyes with her hand, “I’d wager the hottest day of the year so far.”

When Arthur didn’t answer, she glanced over at him, and saw that he had fallen asleep, his mouth slightly open, and his left hand resting on the grass beside him. Biting her lip, she looked at the stream, then back at her sleeping boyfriend, and wondered if she’d be able to get away with it.

If her Mother ever found out, she’d kill her. She’d tell her off for being ‘improper’ and would probably call her a ‘brazen hussy’.

But it was so hot...

Coming to a snap decision, Molly quickly pulled her dress over her head and stood up, glancing once more at Arthur, before padding through the cool grass to the stream’s edge.

Sitting down on the bank, feeling slightly worried that someone would see her wearing nothing but her bra and knickers, she slid her legs into the cool water. She sat that way for several moments, simply letting the stream run over her legs, cooling her down.

Then, glancing around once more, she slid down into the stream, until she was sitting on the muddy bed, not caring that she would probably end up with dirty underwear, just wanting relief from the intense heat.

She didn’t know how long she sat there, in the sparkling water of the stream, idly running her fingers through the silt on the bottom, her mind wandering, her thoughts all too soon invaded by her Mother.

She knew that when she got back that night, she would be in a lot of trouble. She had deliberately defied her that morning; in fact, she was surprised her Mother hadn’t sent out a search party. She knew her Mother was just trying to do what was best for her daughter, but some of Frances Prewett’s ideas were a little out of date.

Sighing, Molly decided she had sufficiently cooled down, and stood up, rivulets of water running down her legs, and was mortified to find Arthur was now awake, leaning on his elbows, a grin on his face as he watched her.

“Oh no!” She murmured, and turned around, her back to him.

“Nice view,” he called, and she could hear the teasing quality in his voice.

“Arthur, close your eyes!” She called, feeling a hot blush creep onto her cheeks.

“Aww, that’ll ruin the fun!”

“Arthur, please!”

Perhaps he heard the slight shake in her voice, or saw the tremble in her hands, but he

complied, firmly closing his eyes.

“Eyes closed,” he said, softly, and heard a sloshing of water, followed by some rustling noises, and the sound of clothes being put on.

“I’m so embarrassed,” Molly muttered, as she munched on a ham roll, “how long were you watching me for, anyway?”

“Not long,” Arthur replied, smiling, “and there’s no need to feel embarrassed. It’s just me.”

“I know,” she said, “but I can’t help the way I feel.”

There was silence for several minutes, but it was a comfortable silence, broken only by the sound of sandwiches being eaten and crisps being crunched.

“Do you ever think about what will happen in the future?” Arthur asked, when their lunch had been eaten.

“All the time,” Molly replied, “especially now we’ve finished Hogwarts.”

“Do you think we’ll still be together in ten years time?” Arthur questioned, reaching for Molly’s hand and placing it in his own.

“Yes,” she said, without hesitation, “although I imagine my Mother will try and make it difficult for us.”

“When doesn’t she?” Arthur grinned.

“True.” Molly shivered slightly; her dress was still somewhat damp from when she had put it on over her wet underwear. She glanced up at the sky, dismayed to see several angry looking clouds above, undoubtedly full with rain. Arthur, who had followed her gaze, sighed.

“We should probably think about going,” he said, “it looks like it’s going to rain.”

“I don’t want to go,” she replied, dreading what her Mother would say, “I want to stay here, with you, forever.”

“I wish,” Arthur smiled, and stood up, beginning to pack away the remnants of their lunch.

Molly stood up, folding the picnic blanket and placing it in the basket. She took Arthur’s hand, and smiled at him, before feeling the first drops of rain beginning to fall.

“Looks like we did that just in time,” she nodded towards the basket, “now come on, before we get soaked!”

They hadn't even got half way across the field, when the heavens opened, and sheets of cold rain slammed down on them, drenching them in seconds. Arthur pulled on Molly's hand, trying to run, but she simply laughed, and broke free from his grip.

"What are you doing?" He shouted, trying to make his voice heard over the pounding of the rain, "you just said we should go before we get soaked!"

"We're already soaked to the bone!" She called back, lifting her arms towards the sky and twirling around laughing, "Let's just enjoy it!"

"Only you," Arthur said, laughingly, "only you could find pleasure in a situation like this."

"Isn't it just amazing, though?" She asked, "Doesn't the rain make you feel...I don't know..." she paused, searching for a word, "...stronger? Happier? Like you can do *anything*?"

She laughed again, tucking a strand of wet hair behind her ear and moving to stand close to Arthur, her skirt clinging to her legs as she walked.

"I don't even care that when I get home my Mother will thoroughly tell me off and let me know in no uncertain terms that I am never to see you again!"

"Shouldn't you?" Arthur asked, suddenly becoming serious, "Care, I mean? Your Mum's perfectly capable of stopping us from seeing each other, and I don't think I could bear that!"

"I wouldn't let her," Molly replied, the laughter gone from her voice, "I'd *never* let her."

"There's a way to make sure she'd never be able to split us up," Arthur said, running his hands through his drenched hair, blinking the raindrops from his eyes.

"And what's that?" Molly said quietly, slipping her hand into Arthur's, her eyes fixed on his.

"We could get married," he said, his voice barely above a whisper, and very nearly drowned out by the hammering of the rain.

"Do you mean that?" Molly asked softly, the wetness on her face nothing to do with the rain.

"Yes," Arthur replied, cupping her face with his left hand, "I love you, Molly, and I don't ever want to be apart from you! I don't want to have to be scared all the time that I'll not be allowed to see you because your Mother says so! I want us to be together...I *want* to be with you!"

He removed his hand from her face, and dropped down onto one knee, the mud that had been churned up from the ongoing downpour, squelching slightly.

“Molly Elizabeth Prewett, will you marry me?”

“Yes! Oh Arthur...” He stood up, and she launched herself at him, winding her arms around his neck, and wrapping her legs around his waist. And then she kissed him, not minding that the rain was now coming down harder than ever, not even bothered that her dress had gone see through.

All she cared about was the fact that she was going to be married to the man she loved, and that she would never have to be apart from him.

It was a perfect, if slightly wet ending, to what had been a perfect summer day.

A/N: This was originally written as a response to justloveron’s Summer Fluff challenge on the HPFF forums.