

LIKE TO A DOUBLE CHERRY

Written by

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INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM, FARMHOUSE - NIGHT (1885)

In a small, candlelit bedroom, a young white girl, ANNE (14), with an angelic look sits at a desk, lost in thought. Her adopted sister, MARY (19), a Native woman, hums while brushing Anne's hair. Finishing, Mary begins to braid.

ANNE

Mary?

Mary makes a noise of acknowledgement, focused on her task.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Will I marry soon do you think?

MARY

(startled, laughing)

Not for a few years, I'd bet.

ANNE

Will you? Soon?

MARY

I don't know. I could be a governess. Or teach.

Anne turns in her chair, pulling the braid apart.

MARY (CONT'D)

Stop moving about, Anne.

ANNE

But what about my lessons?

MARY

You'll be all grown up. You won't need me.

Mary looks at Anne in the mirror. Anne is looking down, scowling, with a furrow in her brow.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'll have to leave someday, Anne.

Anne grabs on to Mary's hand.

ANNE

I'll stop you!

Mary slides next to her and smooths the wrinkle on Anne's forehead.

MARY

Someday. Not today.

The two share a small smile and Mary stands back up, grabbing at Anne's tousled hair.

MARY (CONT'D)  
I'll have to start again. No moving  
this time!

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM, FARMHOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Anne is asleep. Mary is wrapped around her. Mary pets Anne's head, soothing her. Mary closes her eyes.

DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. WIGWAM - NIGHT

In a wigwam, a young native girl, YOUNG MARY (8), is being held as she sleeps by her MOTHER (23), who pets her hair.

EXT. WIGWAM - NIGHT

A fire consumes the wigwam.

INT. WIGWAM - DAY

Young Mary holds a knife. In front of her is a set of antlers, attached to a deer carcass. Tears well in her eyes. Her mother grabs her chin.

MOTHER  
None of that.

Mother grabs the knife and skins the carcass.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Young Mary runs through a woods, the bloodied deer-skinning knife clutched in her hand, surrounded by darkness. Just as she's about to emerge in a clearing filled with light ahead-

EXT. WIGWAM - DAY

Young Mary, stained by blood, stands dead-eyed in front of a burning wigwam. Chaos surrounds her. MEN WITH GUNS drag off BLEEDING WOMEN and CRYING TODDLERS. Amidst the chaos, A BLACK FIGURE stands completely still, watching Mary.

INT. WIGWAM - DAY

Mother, after skinning the deer, cleans the blood from her hands.

MOTHER

We do what we must.

Mother turns the hilt to Young Mary.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Your turn.

EXT. WIGWAM - NIGHT

Young Mary, surrounded by smoke, walks through the mayhem of her village. She stops. At her feet is the shape of a woman, the deer-skinning knife sticking out of her abdomen. Young Mary pulls it out.

INT. WIGWAM - NIGHT

Young Mary lies asleep in her wigwam, alone. She opens her eyes to see her mother's face, strangled and odd, before her.

MOTHER

Go to the woods.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM, FARMHOUSE - NIGHT (LATER)

Mary sits upright, breathing hard and sweating. She begins to cry, but presses her hands to her eyes firmly. She breathes out. Anne stirs behind her and Mary quickly gets up to leave the room.

INT. HALLWAY, FARMHOUSE - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

Mary stops, leaning against the wall. She holds herself in her arms, squeezing her eyes to prevent crying. She takes a second and pulls herself together.

Going over to a CHEST, she shakily reaches behind the back of it. Her hand finds the deer-skinning KNIFE.

EXT. PORCH, FARMHOUSE - NIGHT (LATER)

Mary sharpens her knife on a smooth stone, each movement taking her anger out and calming her breathing.

In the shadow of a tree across from the house, a figure stands. It disappears into the woods as Mary looks up, before returning to her work.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM, FARMHOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Mary slowly and quietly sneaks into bed. Anne wakes up.

ANNE  
(groggily)  
Are you alright?

MARY  
I had to relieve myself. Get back to sleep.

ANNE  
(tearing up)  
I had a bad dream.

MARY  
No tears.

Mary grabs Anne's chin.

MARY (CONT'D)  
You're a strong girl, aren't you?

ANNE  
No.  
(Mary laughs)  
Would you sing to me?

Mary sighs and settles herself, holding Anne in her arms. She sings softly to Anne who quickly falls asleep.

EXT. TOWN - MORNING

Anne skips, dancing to avoid cracks in the cobblestone. Mary keeps pace, pulling Anne from running into strangers on occasion. In front of them walks Anne's father, EDMUND (43) and a wispy woman, FRIEND HOOPES (72). Mary keeps an ear to their conversation.

EDMUND  
And you say, Friend, he's moved into the White's house?

FRIEND HOOPES

I dropped off some of my cooking. A large estate to be sure for such a young man. He's come from Salem. I'd heard his land there was--

EDMUND

Salem? Why, that's quite puritan! He is a Friend, isn't he?

FRIEND HOOPES

(darkly)  
It's why he left.

EDMUND

Will he be at the meeting today?

FRIEND HOOPES

(nodding)  
He dined with the elders a few days back.

EDMUND

What do you think--

FRIEND HOOPES

Oh, hush now, he's up ahead!

SAMSON (34), a handsome young man with a lean frame and puckish face, stands by a vendor's cart, eyeing a hanging piece of red ribbon.

FRIEND HOOPES (CONT'D)

Friend! Samson!

At the noise, both girls turn their attention solely on the group in front of them.

EDMUND

Friend Hoopes, please--

SAMSON

Friend Hoopes. A pleasure. Have I told you yet that your plum pudding was just delicious?

FRIEND HOOPES

(blushing)  
Oh, well, yes. Thank you. I grow the carrots myself.

Edmund coughs.

FRIEND HOOPES (CONT'D)  
Have you met Friend Edmund Farlow?

The men shake hands.

FRIEND HOOPES (CONT'D)  
And his daughter, Anne, and ward,  
Mary.

Samson nods to Mary, but grabs Anne's hand, kissing it. Anne blushes.

SAMSON  
What lovely children.

EDMUND  
Will you walk with us to the  
meeting?

SAMSON  
Why, of course-

A drunk BEGGAR interrupts the group, knocking into Samson, to address Edmund.

BEGGAR  
Sir, do you have any money to  
spare?

Samson brushes off his coat angrily.

SAMSON  
Man, you've nearly knocked me to  
the ground. And you've scuffed my  
shoe!

The beggar goes to his knees, wiping at Samson's shoes.

BEGGAR  
I apologize, sir.

SAMSON  
Up, man, up. There's no need for  
that.

The man stands and looks Samson in the eye for the first time. His expression morphs into horror.

BEGGAR  
Your eyes!

Samson turns to Edmund calmly.

SAMSON

I can smell the drink on him. You should get him some help. I'll watch the girls.

Edmund nods, grabbing the man, who twists and turns to look back at Samson, mumbling incoherently. Friend Hoopes trails after, fussing over the man, leaving Samson, Mary, and Anne looking after them.

SAMSON (CONT'D)

(to Anne, smiling)

Some men simply take up more space than they're worth, don't they?

Anne giggles, simpering, but Mary frowns.

MARY

None of that, Anne.

Samson smiles mockingly at Mary. Without looking away from her, he speaks to Anne.

SAMSON

Does she always tell you what to do, Anne?

Anne looks nervously to Mary, but nods.

SAMSON (CONT'D)

(to Anne, smiling warmly)

Will she always?

Anne's brow furrows. Mary steps forward just as Friend Hoopes returns.

FRIEND HOOPES

I know that was a fright, girls, but it's all alright now. Thank you for watching them Samson.

SAMSON

Of course. I must be going now.

FRIEND HOOPES

You're not going to the meeting?

SAMSON

I have some business to attend to, unfortunately. It was a pleasure seeing you, Friend Hoopes.

(turning to Mary and Anne)

Friend Mary. Friend Anne.



With a last mocking smile to Mary, he stalks off. As the others move on, Mary looks after him, noticing a red ribbon hanging out of his pants pocket.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM, FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Anne sits in a night gown at her desk, brushing her hair and admiring her reflection in a mirror. Mary enters and begins to change for nighttime.

ANNE

Mary?

Mary makes a sound of acknowledgement, focused on her task. Anne starts braiding her own hair.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I don't think it'd be too terrible  
if you were to leave.

Mary stops changing, looking to Anne.

ANNE (CONT'D)

You'll have to leave sometime. And  
I'll be leaving soon after anyway.

Mary slowly resumes changing.

MARY

Anne, you're too young to be  
thinking of that.

ANNE

You don't think I'll make a pretty  
bride? Father says I look the image  
of mother at my age.

Mary sighs and finishes changing. She slides next to her sister and smooths her brow.

MARY

You'll be beautiful and it'll be  
wonderful. Someday.

Anne huffs and stands angrily, still braiding her hair.

ANNE

I'm not a child anymore, Mary.  
You're leaving. You've said so  
yourself. You've no right to tell  
me what to do anymore.

Mary watches in the mirror as Anne finishes her braid and secures it with a red ribbon. Mary quickly stands and reaches for it. Anne pulls away.

MARY  
Anne, where did you get that?

ANNE  
It's mine.

Mary reaches for the ribbon. Anne turns again.

MARY  
Did Samson give that to you? When did you see him? Was he in the house?

ANNE  
Stop grabbing for it.

MARY  
Anne--

ANNE  
Mary. That's enough. It's mine and I want to wear it. Now stop and leave it.

Anne goes to lie down, but Mary does not move.

MARY  
I don't like him, Anne. He's not a good man. Anne, you--

Anne props herself up on the bed.

ANNE  
--Can decide for myself. Thank you.

Anne lays back down.

ANNE (CONT'D)  
(whispering harshly)  
You aren't my mother.

Mary pauses another moment, accepts defeat, and moves to the bed. They lay as far from the other as possible: Anne turned to the opposite wall playing with her ribbon and Mary looking up to the ceiling, lost in thought. She closes her eyes.

DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. WIGWAM - NIGHT

Mary lies asleep in her wigwam, alone. She opens her eyes to see Samson laying next to her, smiling. She gasps and turns quickly on her side, only to see her mother's face, strangled and odd, before her.

MOTHER

Go to the woods.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM, FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Mary bolts up, sweating and breathing erratically. She calms herself, before turning to Anne, who's missing.

Mary jumps out of bed.

INT. HALLWAY, FARMHOUSE - NIGHT, MINUTES LATER

As quickly as possible, Mary puts on her boots and Edmund's overcoat. She lights a lantern and is about to leave the house when she hesitates and looks to the chest.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT, MINUTES LATER

Mary wanders through the dark, spinning on occasion, growing ever more frantic, when a girl's scream is heard in the distance. Mary runs toward it and begins to hear the thumping of music and girls yelling grow louder.

She approaches a clearing with a large bonfire in the middle. Dozens of YOUNG GIRLS, ages 12 to 25, dance around it in night gowns, their faces covered in blood or dirt. Mary runs into the throng, looking for Anne, grabbing girls, but can't find her.

Through the smoke, Mary sees Samson sitting atop a throne, deer antlers affixed to the top. A dozen more girls sit at his feet, some drinking whiskey or moonshine and some engaging in sexual acts. Samson looks directly at Mary, smiling. Mary stalks toward him.

MARY

Samson.

SAMSON

I'm glad you could join us, Friend.

MARY

What is this? What have you done  
with my sister?

SAMSON

Your sister? I do not have your  
sister.

MARY

She is my ward. Let her leave.

SAMSON

I've no control over any of the  
girls, Friend. If they wish to,  
they can leave.

MARY

No, you've put a spell on her.

SAMSON

I've only made her a promise.  
(gesturing to the party)  
She's so lonely at home. Friend.

Mary pulls out the deer-skinning knife.

MARY

Release her.

SAMSON

(smiling coyly)  
Is that really what you want?  
Wouldn't you be so much happier  
here? Among your people?

Mary grips the knife harder, raising her arm, and takes  
another step.

MARY

These aren't my people.

SAMSON

Aren't they, Friend? All these  
little lost children. Without a  
family. Without a future.

Mary hesitates, thinking about his words.

MARY

That isn't my sister.

SAMSON  
(laughing)  
Well, if you're sure. Do what you  
must.

Mary turns to the girls at the bonfire, her eyes searching  
for Anne.

SAMSON (CONT'D)  
Friend?

Mary drops her arm.

SAMSON (CONT'D)  
Friend--

MARY  
Anne. Anne!

SAMSON  
She won't listen to you. She  
doesn't need you anymore. But you  
need us. Come here--

MARY  
(ignoring Samson)  
I know you can hear me. Anne? Stop!

As she screams, she throws the knife into the fire. The girls  
all freeze and stare at her.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Anne. If you come back, I will  
leave. Some day. Probably soon. I  
will. And you will too, someday.  
But you'll always have me. You will  
never be alone. Not like I've been  
alone.

INT. WIGWAM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Quick cut to Young Mary laying in bed with her mother holding  
her.

EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT

Lightning strikes. Mary doesn't notice.

MARY  
You will never understand. I  
watched them burn my village.  
Slaughter my people. My family.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAYBREAK (FLASHBACK)

Quick cut to Mary's village burning, her people screaming, shots firing. Young Mary looks down at her dead mother, the deer-skinning knife in her chest.

EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT

Thunder cracks. The deer skinning knife blackens in the fire.

MARY

I was alone for five days in the woods.

EXT. WOODS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Quick cut to Young Mary in the woods, dirty, bloody, and terrified, clutching the knife to her chest. A dark figure seems to be moving closer through the brush. Young Mary panics and falls back, landing at the feet of Edmund. Behind him, TODDLER ANNE (3) peeks out from around his legs.

EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT

In the clearing, Mary holds back tears and a light rain begins to fall. She spots Anne across the bonfire, peeking out from behind another girl, and speaks directly to her.

MARY

He didn't leave me. And, because of your father, I had a family again. I had you.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM, FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Quick cut to Mary laying in bed with Anne, holding her.

EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT

Mary looks to Anne.

MARY

You were right. I'm not your mother. And you're not my ward. But I think you still need me.

Mary steps toward Anne, reaching her hand out. Anne steps back. A downpour begins as Mary releases her tears.

MARY (CONT'D)

Anne. Please. I need you. I need you. Please come back. You're my sister.

As the bonfire dies out from torrential rain, Mary collapses to the ground, sobbing. Anne runs to her, her ribbon flying from her.

When she gets to her, they are alone in the clearing in darkness. The rain has slowed. Anne wraps herself around Mary's body as Mary did for Anne.

ANNE

Mary! Mary! I'm sorry.

Mary continues to cry, hiding her face. Anne hides her face in Mary's back.

ANNE (CONT'D)

(whispering, tearing up)

When you leave, will we still be sisters?

Mary turns to face Anne, wiping Anne's tears. Anne wipes Mary's face and the girls hug.

MARY

Everyday, always.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY (1891)

EVE (8), a Native girl in a school girl's outfit, walks along, following a butterfly. She looks up to the dark trees ahead where something humanoid is nearly visible in the shadows. She takes a step toward it when a voice calls out.

MARY

Eve! Come on!

Mary, dressed as a teacher and surrounded by a group of young Native children, gestures toward a school behind her where more Native children play. Eve takes one last look toward the trees, before going to Mary and taking her hand.

Behind them, a red ribbon drifts in the wind.