

ROADKILL

Barry Grills

OVERTURE

The best nights on the Liberty Freeway are when the moon is full, when the moon rises over the freeway frenzy and claws its way into the black soup of the waiting sky. Then everything is perfect. Then you begin to believe you've found your necessary home inside the community of space and time . . . inside the labyrinthian black of night . . . even inside the hopeless ethos of some universally hopeless purpose you're too busy to challenge or recognize.

Every sensation goes clear, collecting translucently on nights like these. Each cumulative flick of your gaze into the blue-black gauze of night reveals a little more of the face of the moon until the orb becomes godlike . . . cheeks, jowls and blemishes, a nose, eyes and a smile that looks like a grimace, a grimace that nearly smiles. Each hurried glance at the moon's silver face, all you can afford in the heat of this high-speed charge along the freeway, reveals more of its shimmering rings, its halo. And you realize how much of an accomplice the moon is to the thrill of the ride, the way it spits light at the asphalt and concrete of the freeway where the rodancer tires sing like sirens and the catchers shriek with glee.

Technically the sounds of the ride are always the same, chaotic, cataclysmic, metallic, ultimately ecstatic. You don't need the full moon to hear the carnival mayhem racing along the freeway, but even here the full moon makes the sound richer -- all your

senses are wealthier -- the sound, the smell and the touch. But on full-moon, man-in-the-moon nights, your caring about sound retreats a little against the sight of the light. You learn your eyes are too hungry for your ears to want to hear. So you stretch the lens of your seeing up and down and wide until, like some thirsty maw at an oasis well, you drink to the point of gluttony, unable to consume enough. You drink greedily of this moonlit night sprinkling down on the freeway chaos, like you will never cease being thirsty.

Sometimes, at the edge of your perception, you cannot believe how much light and dark there actually is. The race happens so fast and crazy. . . so endlessly . . . so permanently . . . some rodancer directly behind you, driving up your ass . . . so close you can feel the fury at the root of its bumfuck joy . . . its headlights in your mirror so insistent it's like a relentless interrogation . . . someone trying to break you down . . . someone trying to force you to confess. The wheelman back there is so much the same as you are, you nearly inhabit the same body, your senses coupling twins. His wheels and your wheels are metallic caresses, and you laugh out loud when the sparks explode as his catcher kisses the asphalt just inches from your back. And you think of some knife briefly flirting with the fabric of a vein while the smoke and fumes from everyone's exhaust gyrate stuporously in the glare of so many rapidly moving lights.

You are framed in the illumination the way you would be captured in the explosive glare of war, your life so tenuous and threatened your frenzy explodes into the exotic shards of everything you need: some lioness, most wheelmen brag, tits and legs and ass, some lioness you have only imagined, or like one or two you think you've actually seen. There are wheelmen who claim they visit *the* lioness -- the one they're *never* going to meet -- as they travel the freeway thrill, conjuring her up inside their

fancy, letting their notion of her burrow like a worm in the place . . . neither heart nor soul . . . where a man ends up believing he can have everything he's denied.

Crazy, but that's the way it is on the Liberty Freeway. That's the light and the shadow, the dark and the lightning bolts. No wonder you turn lusty inside the gaze of the moon, mesmerized by the way it transforms the rodancer ritual, dressing it in some fabric of cream and silk, laying it out in soft, mysterious shadows inside which the rodancer light and catcher sparks can feed on themselves like cannibals. Here you imagine so much more, work a dozen things up inside your mind, transforming the retaining wall of the freeway, blurred at the boundaries of your vision, into some high speed rail car legend moving back against the grain habit sews into your mind, until you almost imagine the passenger faces at the windows, retreating shyly away from the glass.

Not much to smell on nights like these and you don't miss it much, because sight and sound are enough, but the odours are there just the same, delicately at least, the fumes of rubber painting a film along the concrete, the faint stroke of gasoline and exhaust, and the leather of your seat where you perspire like a dying, desperate lover. The sweat ends up stinking the most. It gathers in an acrid stench during those few hours of delight when you drive your maniacal shift around the Liberty Freeway oval, cheating death and cheating life, suspecting in some small way you are even cheating *hell*.

In the end, the journey around and around is so much like your heart is gliding through the clouds you don't even care whether it's your eyes, your ears or the tongue-sucking flavour of the experience lifting you closer to Godallah. No reason for there to be a reason. It's just too full and complete without it. No excuse either in the tingle of the existentialene blowing your senses wild. All you know is that you just don't want it to stop, don't want it to ever end because, when it's gone, over, finished for the night, you

will no longer have any reason to be. All that will be left is this empty, wasted casing, what you've now become, standing there without function, too hollow to fall down and die, too used up even to answer the call of death.

Some say existentialene is called gleam because of full moon nights on the freeway. But no-one remembers for sure. There are too many who have never travelled the Liberty Freeway, yet claim they've felt similar sensations while fucking, while gaming, while working out some plan, while having a dream or remembering some exquisite moment in the past, made richer by the drug. Some even say gleam turns shit into food, turns food into eating Godallah. No matter. Inside the freeway oval is where you know the best of it. Wearing gleam, when you're cruising the Liberty Freeway, you're dancing like sperm and egg inside some frantic copulation between heaven and hell. Driving the Liberty Freeway is like sailing through the viscous honey of some perfect life and death blend of all it is to be, some fusion so clear and powerful *it* and *not* the gleam is what sticks forever to the pores lying hidden along your flesh.

Of course there's more to make full moon nights perfect. It's when the roadkill makes its run. Sometimes there are as many as twenty in one night along the thousand miles of the freeway oval. They say no one has ever made it. How could they after all? Not with thousands of leering rodancers screaming over the asphalt, upwards of one hundred and fifty miles an hour, breathing fire like dragons. But for reasons no one clearly understands, full moon nights are when the Bonded in the camps inside the oval are moved by their glimpse of the other side. It calls out to them, the other side of their lives, the other side of their hopes. They believe they must escape -- maddened by the moon and by what they nearly see. They convince themselves they can make it, although they never do. On the Liberty Freeway you call them roadkill. Back in the camps where

they used to live and to which they never return, it's said they are quested. Killed in their quest. Killed *by* their quest. As if death is more than death. As if death has some kind of function the dead can look back upon and appreciate. As if death has some other purpose beyond affirming the passage of time, or hanging on rusty hinges in the doorway between you and nothingness.

No matter. The moonlight brings the Bonded out. As a wheelman, you recognize the patterns. On darker nights only one or two will try their luck. Many nights, when it rains and it's completely black, when hope is imprisoned by some kind of necessary acceptance, there is no one at all. No roadkill on the freeway from which they cannot escape.

Not that a wheelman needs *roadkill* to dance his reel with death. The Liberty Freeway has other ways to snatch a man's life away, a rodancer malfunction, for instance, or what wheelmen sometimes call a gleam in the eye of fate.

Rodancer breakdown is part of the sport, part of the risk. If your rodancer comes to a halt in the chaos of the freeway race, you end up with nowhere to go. You're caught for a tiny second inside your rodancer coffin, before the catchers on the front of the other vehicles carve up your machine, spitting you and your wreckage over the freeway wall, grinding some of the debris into the pores of the pavement until everything is gone. Or sometimes you catch fire and keep driving inside the flames. Then, after your flesh has burned away in the hailstorm of your screams, your rodancer keeps on going until it finds a place to leap the wall, like a rocket carving a crease into the fabric of its own oblivion.

A gleam death isn't part of the sport but it's a malfunction just the same . . . too much gleam, too much existentialene, too long standing on the precipice where you can overlook too much. Do that -- climb the precipice to the ultimate verisimilitude of what

we term *too much* -- and too much becomes the hell into which you must inevitably fall. No one knows what a gleam death is until it happens to you, but wheelmen talk about what they imagine it is, a gleam so perfect you want to die with it on your breath, a gleam so wide and deep and high you want to leave this world believing you've discovered how everything can be perfect or whole. It *can't* be perfect, of course; lies like these are just the gleam inside your soul. But when you find *that* out, *if* you find that out, it doesn't mean a shit. Too late then to deal with the bitter truth. By then the gleam has taken you so far away from the person you used to be, you can't come back again. You discover, there at the end, what it's like to have your second of life finally over. You know your instant has come and gone, and you probably realize you maybe haven't done a single thing you actually needed to do. Godallah whispers your failure into your ear in a smarmy, androgynous alto . . . His cackling fading away in the complete velvet of His deepening darkness. So some say, one hears. So it is said, when the conversation turns to the murk or mud of death.

But when you're alive, so completely alive, when you're flying the freeway asphalt, it's best on full moon nights when there's roadkill under the moon, when there's so much for your senses to suck inside your skull. Life is so distant then from death, the gleam cold on your flesh and hot inside your head, the moon painting your night with just a whisper-brush of its devious, dashing colour, this is when it's best. When you think about it later, when you recall the majesty of the ride, you can't conceive of a single doubt. On full moon nights there is no question about the power of the Liberty Freeway. The Liberty Freeway, after all, in all its carnage and delight, is the greatest wheelman of them all. Because, while you drive the Liberty Freeway, the Liberty Freeway is driving *you*.

In his camp, the Bonded man called Keats spends most of his evenings at the edge of Bronte's fire. He positions the wind at his back to keep the smoke away, then moves again if the wind direction changes during his gradually passing hours. The smoke from the fires in the camp is like time -- it's what kills all of them eventually. But if everyone in the camp suspects the smoke carries lethal toxins into their lungs and brains, they accept its guilt benignly because the smoke has *always* been guilty. In the communities of the Bonded "always" and "never" are extremely important words; those who use them faithfully have learned to swallow the bitter acceptance integral to convention. For the Bonded, life is mostly a matter of endurance. The campfire smoke is currency in the market of their survival. One must cook, eat and be warm to live, and the toxic smoke is the price that is paid for this. The word they like to use in the camp is *balance*. *Balance* is there to define and enclose what exists, keeping out what can *never* be. *Always*. *Never*. *Balance*. These are the three required words when one gives in to convention in the camp.

It's an ebony smoke, this smoke from their own fires, embroidered at the edges with grey. Sometimes, when the sun slices through the camp at a low, persistent angle, the smoke displays a muted green hue which coyly disappears the harder one looks for it. As if colour too is balance, shielding a lie in its truth, maintaining a truth in its lie. The smoke brings tears to the eyes. Windy days are a boon when brisk breezes carry the fumes higher aloft, over the concrete block walls and metal roofs of The Company, over the freeway and the city buildings in the distance, and beyond to the mystery of a world out there Keats has never seen. He controls his curiosity about what lives in the distance and receives the dissipating smoke. He watches it drift as far as the freeway five hundred

yards away, then, as it crosses this boundary into some universe no one understands, he stops wondering where it goes and lets his wonder evaporate. It's the windless nights that do the damage. The smoke simply levitates and hangs above the camp like a net. And the tents turn sooty with its pungency while the Bonded weep around their fires, their eyes turning red in ragged pain.

Keats knows himself to be like everyone else in the camp. He imagines no other way of life, he anticipates no changes. He finds comfort in the sameness, assurance in the ritual, safety in his acceptance of his lot. He is twenty-four years old, the youngest of three brothers and one sister. If he is fortunate in Godallah's plan, he is in the middle of his life, although it has never entered his mind to wish to live longer than he will. The gratitude he feels in familiarity eases the burden of his diminishing comprehension. He enjoys a past without sensation, caring nothing for a million events -- some of them large, most of them small -- that time has caused to transpire. He knows only that he has successfully lived his childhood which ended when he was ten, the day the Calvins, The Company police, came to his parents' tent and took him to work for the first time. That day he was given a position in the existentialene division, in the plastic jar department where he has worked six days a week ever since. He will work, filling each jar with gleam, in the work space they provided him, until the day he dies. He was aware this would happen before they took him to work, the way he is aware of it now. He does not care that his life has never belonged to him in some way he only nearly understands it could. There isn't much else than the life Godallah decrees. Keats is compelled to obey.

It is an omnipresent reality that this is the way Godallah wants His world to be. Knowing that Godallah is the force of life, there are no questions a man or woman can even think of asking about Godallah's concept of their lives. There is no point in asking a

question which will never receive an answer.

As an infant, Keats was taken to the worship tent and Truth has been pounded into his brain ever since, with the rhythmic regularity of a drum. At the worship tent each Sunday, the priest warns the people not to ask questions which warrant no answer, according to Godallah's plan. Fingers dancing the vehement jazz of piety, the priest reminds everyone that questions originate only among those who have no faith. His arms stretched high in the air, his fingers gesticulating ferociously in the silence, the priest explains no one has need of questions if he or she possesses and accepts the ultimate Truth provided by Godallah.

"There are no questions," the priest tells the congregation, "because there are no answers. Godallah is both question and answer, and being both question and answer, *every* question and *every* answer, Godallah has no need to provide explanations to us. Godallah, Himself, is beyond explanation. Because Godallah is Truth. Because Godallah is all there is. Because this is Godallah's world."

And the congregation's many hands reach high towards the tent ceiling, each finger moving as one, chanting in silent signs their acceptance of the nature of Truth: "This is Godallah's world."

It is also understood that not every man and woman truly accepts Godallah's ultimate vision. Sometimes people go crazy and ask crazy questions, all the more reason for people to shut questions out of their minds. Because questions and craziness are joined to one another: it's a question which makes you crazy and the craziness which makes you ask it. Keats has heard questions asked himself, although only once . . . one evening long ago when Jung and Jung's wife, Keller, joined his family at their fire. But he cannot remember now what exactly was asked. Too much time has ticked by during

the ritual of his life since then. All he remembers is that Jung and Keller paid the price one pays for questions and craziness. They visited Keats' family fire and the next day they were gone. Quested one night, it was said by everyone back then . . . until they were never mentioned again.

Keats' sister is his closest sibling in age. She is married now and expecting her first child. She will never be called upon to work again because The Company, knowing she is fertile, requires her to have four children and raise them until they are ten. This is her duty and, after it is accomplished, she will be honoured by The Company which will leave her to spend her days in peace. Keats' older brother, called Keats With The Withered Arm, has one son working for The Company now, two others as yet underage. His other brother, Keats-In-Between, cannot have children and is accompanied through life by a sterile woman. Unable to conceive, both of them will work until the day they begin their dying.

The Company regulates all of this according to Godallah's will. It is achieved with a system of numbers no one understands, numbers implanted in the flesh of their hands, placed there like a tiny shadow under the skin by The Company soon after a Bonded infant's birth, according to Godallah's will. The number is called a number of sin which, maintains the camp priest, signifies the perfect clarity in the complexity of the will in Godallah's abundant plan. Without Godallah's abundant plan, the priest says, the world would descend into chaos. Godallah has also decreed, when a man is twenty-four and a woman is twenty, that their numbers of sin be *mathematized* to reveal if they should marry and who should marry whom. When the numbers are blended together, according to Godallah's formula -- which nobody understands -- both man and woman are tested for fertility. If they are so blessed, The Company requires them to marry, according to

Godallah's will.

All of this social and domestic arrangement has been practised for a very long time and everyone knows it is merely the endless cycle of life. All of it is decreed by Godallah's will and implemented, on His behalf, by The Company. It has worked this way forever so that everything survives. What makes Godallah great is that He has a plan.

History is The Company and The Company is perpetuity. It is the axle of the present to which the wheels of past and future are permanently affixed. The Company, it is known, produces everything, giving some of it to the people to enrich their simple lives. No one tries to catalogue everything The Company manufactures -- nor would they wish to because there is quite simply too much of it -- but it is enough to know all of it is created according to Godallah's will. The plant which is The Company is as large as a world, with divisions and departments for as far as the eye can see. Each division houses a camp of workers just like Keat's camp. Sometimes, when there has been too much infertility, new families are transferred from one camp to another to ensure that the people grow stronger and more fertile. Although it is known not everything produced is given to the people, no one can even imagine where the other products go. Nor is this a worthwhile question. Best to make the products according to Godallah's will. Godallah is Master of everything and knows what must be done. Godallah owns it all, even The Company and its workers, but most of all He owns The Truth.

Existentialene is one of those commodities not made for the people at large, but for some other mysterious purpose Godallah does not share with them. Elsewhere Godallah's world makes use of the drug, although Keats cannot imagine why. Keats has been warned not to touch it and wears gloves to keep it away from his flesh. He knows how evil the drug can be when it comes in contact with careless hands. A man he knew

named Hesse The Elder, who worked across the table from him three men and women down to his right, dipped his fingers into the drug one day and went gently, but deeply crazy. The Calvins had to shoot him to death to get the smile to leave his lips.

But The Company donates much of what it makes to the people -- food, clothing, tents, the fuel for the warming fires. Godallah does provide and The Company is His provider.

Keats can speak out loud, in the way, as an infant, he could scream or cry, but although his voice can carry sound, Godallah demands he sign like his Bonded neighbours in the camp.

“To keep us separate,” the priest has explained on the eve of Keats becoming ten years old, when the priest was teaching him and a few others in his camp what his role in life would be.

“Separate from whom?”

“This is not for you to know. There are no questions like that in a world as fine as Godallah’s world.”

Yet Keats has heard the Calvins talking. And the dreaded, abhorrent Barbarians who so often speak only in anger, in giddy cruelty, a cruelty that grips and tears your soul when you live among the Bonded.

Keats can speak in whispers, although this is always to himself. Words are impossible for him in this way, his whisper is a kind of buzz. Now and then he likes to pretend to Bronte that he has some words he can say -- because of how he feels about her -- but if he ever truly heard his voice out loud, he believes it would frighten him. To speak in the way the Calvins do would launch him along the road that ends in madness.

All of this is what Keats understands about his life as he sits by Bronte’s fire. He

does not question it . . . it is all he has ever known. The curiosity he enjoyed as a child has slipped away from him.

Except . . .

Sometimes the number of sin, unreadable in his mind, tingles gently in the flesh of his open palm. When this tingling begins, it will not stop until it deems itself ready. Scratching it only makes the tingling worse. Sometimes, even after the sensation finally departs, Keats stares at the number under his skin a while. Then, and only then, a mysterious idea stumbles into his mind. The idea is his secret and it shames him so deeply he cannot even speak of it to Bronte. To admit it would be to reveal that he is weak, that, like many other people, craziness flirts with him at the edge of his private thoughts. But sometimes he begins to wonder if the number of sin is not Godallah's will at all, but a leash contrived by The Company to make him do what they want him to do. Usually, if the tingling does not come back, he forgets this dangerous speculation. Then, when he is able to close his mind to it, he feels grateful to be sane again. Soon he becomes in every way what The Company wants him to be.

So it is on this autumn night in the camp, Keats weeps in the windless smoke which rises from Bronte's fire. Through his tears he watches the day continue to evolve. It is twilight now, a dusk hiding in the fibres of the smoke, waiting to be displaced by coming night. Bronte is inside her family's tent, using the toilet. Nearby her younger siblings are in bed and Bronte's mother watches over them so that Keats and Bronte can be alone with one another for a while.

Keats closes his eyes but it does not end the burning. He ignores his discomfort, seeking a quiet peace in himself in the few minutes before evening arrives. He wants to

be aware of himself as simply *being*, to see himself in his mind's eye as a man who is going to be married, who will have children and who, in these large and gratifying ways, will have pleased himself and Godallah, and his friends in the rest of the camp.

But focus is difficult. As soon as the notion to be content with himself enters his mind, he loses his resolve and is distracted again by the smoke. He is aware that it is so much a part of their lives, that the smoke carries with it a prevailing, unending sadness he has never been able to define. He studies it as it hangs in the air, soft in the distance where it shapes the landscape, harsh as one gets closer to the fire where it originates. Tonight, in the stillness, the smoke is so dense Keats cannot see beyond the other tents in the camp. On windy nights he would be able to make out the wall of the factory, the pattern of the concrete blocks, the little nicks in the red paint of the door where a Calvin is always stationed, his face masked against this same smoke so that *he*, unlike his charges, is safer, able to live a longer, more fruitful life. But this evening, the smoke just hangs in layers which hide the Calvin away. And it discolours everything Keats sees. Sometimes here in the smoke, it is easy to believe he and not his world is at the root of any confusion he feels about his life and circumstances.

Keats shoos his resentments away. At last he finds the sense of comfort he craves by growing grateful about Bronte and the unusual nature of his good fortune. Keats and Bronte share The Magic. In the camp, when a man and woman want each other deeply, it is called The Magic -- if it occurs between a man and a woman The Company has decreed must marry. People here sometimes talk about how rare The Magic is between a man and a woman. Marriage, after all, is a lottery based on the number of sin, and the seed of The Magic existing in two people before their numbers come up only occasionally defies the laws of chance. The Magic takes root in other marriages, to other

men and women, but rarely before the marriage. No, the more common Magic in the camp sometimes develops with time, as the marriage seasons itself. And this is a blessing of great importance because, too often, for others, for the unfortunate, The Magic never germinates. Faced with this failure, the man and woman have only one solace -- their blind, accepting adherence to what is expected of them by The Company, Godallah and the other Bonded in the camp.

But Keats and Bronte feel The Magic powerfully. Sometimes Keats swells with pride because some of the older, wiser people living in the camp have remarked they have never seen such a strong Magic before. He listens to their stories and accolades with a grateful heart, when they tell him they noticed an opportunity for The Magic in him and Bronte long before the numbers ordained their marriage. They tell him how they couldn't help but notice the way he and Bronte smiled at one another from time to time, although it was wrong to call it The Magic then, before the numbers of sin permitted it.

The Magic, like most rituals in the camp, is rigidly defined. There is no exception to the word's meaning. The Magic can only exist between a man and woman who are deemed by the numbers of sin to be married. And it applies only to a man and a woman who wish to marry one another in the way The Company wants them to. Before their numbers merge at the mysterious hands of The Company, the state of wishing, which only the lottery will transform into The Magic, is quite another matter, a hope and caring so potentially sad the camp has no sign for it. There is great risk in caring deeply for someone The Company may not let you marry. While the lottery can transform it into The Magic, there is a greater chance The Company will mix the numbers of sin in a way unleashing only The Regret. For when a man and a woman wish for someone they are not permitted to marry, they sometimes bring more than duty to their marriage to someone

else. What they bring is something bitter which disables their happiness. In the camp, The Bonded call this bitterness The Regret, an acid so cruel it eats away the flesh from emotional life itself. Because Godallah provides no way out of a marriage planned by The Company, once The Regret exists, few are able to escape it. There is no escape from a marriage ordained by The Company. Not even brief infidelity. Infidelity in the camps is punishable by death. When a man and woman labour under the weight of The Regret, the suffering they feel is at least preferable to death by firing squad at some mysterious location in the city.

No wonder, when people noticed Bronte and Keats smiling at one another in a yearning they could not hide, some in the camp felt a deep concern for them. No wonder, when The Company announced Keats and Bronte must marry, there was a great gush of private celebration in the camp. Those who talked about it afterwards even claimed to be so pleased they derived a little bit of magic themselves from The Magic between Keats and Bronte.

Having received these kinds of endorsements many times in the past few months of his engagement, and having felt as he does now -- that feelings of need are more enjoyable when strangers notice and verify them -- Keats feels himself blessed each time Bronte comes out of her tent and moves to sit beside him at the fire. He smiles a rapturous smile, caressing his concept of her beauty with the least clumsy of his amorous talents, the honesty in his gaze.

Keats has believed Bronte is a beauty for a long time now. But his conclusion is only a feeling bestowed on his perception by the kindness and enthusiasm living inside The Magic. In the camp there is no word or sign for beauty -- it is only a concept one feels with one's own judgment. While Godallah permits this feeling, He condemns the

word as sin. Here, no man or woman is any more beautiful than any other man or woman. If a person believes someone is beautiful and you are to marry them, then you are blessed inside The Magic. On the other hand, if you must marry someone else, you are cursed with your Regret. Godallah is very strict about what it is right to feel.

Which means beauty is hard to convey, even to the one who is beautiful, there being no sign for it. Still Keats has found his ways . . . in love he is a creative man.

“I will try to make you pregnant every night I am alive,” he has told Bronte more than once, blustering a little about passions and needs he has not attempted yet. “Even when you’re pregnant or not permitted to get pregnant, I will practice making you pregnant . . .” and here he has blushed at the provocation in his boasting . . . “so I never forget how much it needs to be done.”

Bronte has blushed too at his words, *her* way of feeling The Magic. Her delicate fingers, when she signs a response, are cautious and polite, held close to her lap so only he can see what she says. “I am glad you will be my husband,” is what she usually says.

Remembering those occasions now, on this autumn night around her fire, Keats stares at Bronte in wonder. Her beautiful, delicate face, even with smoke-tears staining her cheeks, swells his blood and imagination. He signs for her to lean close to him. Then, when she does, he sticks out his tongue and impulsively licks the smoke-tears from her face, not knowing why he does these things or if there is any reason that he shouldn’t. He hopes the touch of his tongue at the wetness near her eyes conveys -- with their marriage nearly six months away -- how much he yearns for the time to pass quickly. He does not want her to know that sometimes he is afraid . . . that sometimes he frets about how dangerous it is to dwell with her so powerfully inside The Magic.....