

Kasper led Heartthrob up the stairs.

Very gently, Kasper opened Pumpkin's bedroom door and they went inside.

The room was illuminated by a shaft of moonlight that came through the open window and shone directly on Pumpkin's sleeping face. She was lying on her back, the sheets pulled up to her chin, her long curly hair spread across the pillow like a golden halo.

"Lovely-Jubbly," said Heartthrob.

Kasper smiled with pride and nodded.

There was a small, Polaroid photograph on the bedside cabinet. It showed Pumpkin and Kasper together, hugging each other and smiling. Pumpkin had taken the photo by holding the camera at arm's length.

Heartthrob picked the photo up and stared at it. "Lovely-jubbly," he said. Then added, "the frame, I mean."

Pumpkin's golden brooch was on the bedside cabinet as well. Heartthrob went to pick it up, but Kasper snatched it away. "This is Pumpkin's favourite thing," Kasper said, clutching the brooch tight. "It makes her feel sparkling just looking at it." Suddenly, a moth flew in through the open window and landed on Pumpkin's nose.



"Ha!"

Heartthrob laughed, and pointed. "Doesn't look very sparkling with a moth on her nose, does she?"

"Shut up!" snapped Kasper. He rushed over, cupped the moth in his hands and threw it out of the window. The moth landed on the glass outside. Its legs made tiny ticking sounds against the surface.

The bedroom door opened!

Kasper turned to see Heartthrob leaving.

"Wait!" called Kasper, rushing after him. "Where are you going?"

"The Gloom calls me," replied Heartthrob, walking swiftly down the stairs.

"But..." Kasper couldn't believe Heartthrob was leaving so suddenly. He followed him downstairs and into the kitchen.

"But..."

"But what, man?" asked Heartthrob, still walking.

"But... you haven't got your roses yet!"

"Thought you didn't want me to have any."

They went out into the garden.

"It's different now," Kasper said. "We're friends."

Heartthrob turned to face him.

The roses that he had broken off earlier were still scattered on the ground. Kasper picked them up and thrust them into Heartthrob's arms. There were so many, Heartthrob found it difficult to carry them all. When all the flowers had been picked up, Kasper started breaking off some more.

I'll drop them if you give me too many, man," Heartthrob warned. But Kasper continued pilling them on him. When Heartthrob's arms were too full to take any more, Kasper started sticking some into his pocket.

Finally, he put a rose behind Heartthrob's ear.

"Mind the quiff, man." Petals were already falling from the blooms, landing on Heartthrob's pointed boots.

"open the gate for me, man"

Kasper did so, and Heartthrob walked out of the garden and into The Nothing.

"It's very dark out there." Kasper noticed.

"I know my way," Heartthrob said, taking a few steps into the night. "I just go across The Nothing, then cross The Scream and I'm at the Arch"

"So, all that lies between The Nothing and The arch is The Scream?"

"Spot on man."

Heartthrob continued walking away.

"Will you come back tomorrow night?" Asked Kasper.

"Almost probably definitely," replied Heartthrob, his voice getting fainter and fainter.

Kasper peered into the darkness. He could just make out Heartthrob's shape, struggling to hold the roses.

"You're my first friend." Kasper called.

"I'm a very honoured Heartthrob."

And then the darkness swallowed him up.

