

Flowers for you

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The flowers of spring had begun to bloom while the moomins slept soundly. If it weren't for the noises Moomin was making, being the first to wake, the others would have stayed in bed a few extra days. But Moomin could not contain his happiness, like every year, because spring meant his best friend would come back into the valley. Moomin was feeling extra giddy, having dreamt of activities to do with Snufkin while hibernating. He was already busy preparing a flower crown for him when he returned. He had gotten inspiration from a dream where they ran through the green fields by the river, wearing flower crowns. He hoped Snufkin would like them. He'd tried his best to remember the flowers his friend liked. Moomin had taken to reading a book from his mother: a book of plant symbolism. He started to learn the meanings of all the flowers and plants in the valley. Heading out with a basket, he decided what flowers he would pick to surprise his traveling friend: red camellias, gardenias, morning glories, and zinnias. To his surprise, while he was searching about in the flower fields, he heard someone shout his name. In the distance across the river, he would see a figure under the trees. Moomin started to walk towards the stranger, when he saw the familiar hat.

"Snufkin!" Moomin cheered. He ran as fast as his little legs would let him, adrenaline spiking at the sight of his friend. Snufkin began to allow more affection, hugging and holding hands with Moomin occasionally. So when the two met on the bridge, Moomin engulfed Snufkin in a big hug, pressing him into his chest fur. Once they let go, Snufkin noticed the basket of flowers his friend had dropped on the ground.

"Oh, did I interrupt you in the middle of something Moomin?" He said pointing to the small bouquet.

"Oh! No, I was just going to make us flower crowns! Now that you're here want to join me?" He smiled, gesturing to the lush garden of various flowers behind the moomin house. Snufkin nodded and the two headed that direction.

Around lunchtime, they heard Moominmama call for them. The two ran to the house, wearing their delicately made flower crowns. Moominmama waved at Snufkin, and offered him lunch.

"Only if I'm not intruding," He said, going inside once she reassured him.

"Of course not Snufkin, we always enjoy your company." She replied, heading to the kitchen. While they ate, Snufkin remembered what kind of flowers Moomin had been carrying when they reunited. He wondered if Moomin knew what they meant. They were quite a statement, mostly about love and the longing for a missing friend. He blushed a little at the thought. Moomin noticed this and raised an eyebrow.

"You okay Snufkin?" He asked, in between bites of pancake. Snufkin silently nodded, slowly taking a bite of his sandwich, staring deep into Moomins eyes. The two burst out in laughter, only stopping when they heard Little My shout at them to be quiet. They giggled, going back outside to continue their crown making. They decided to take a sky watching break, Snufkin tying long pieces of grass together while moomin laid on his back counting the clouds.

"How was this winter Moomin?" Snufkin broke the silence, thinking Moomin was getting bored.

"Oh, nothing special. Sleeping, waking up, falling back asleep, waking up again to Sniff dropping pots. The usual," Moomin snickered. Snufkin quietly gasped, spooking moomin a little.

"What is it Snufkin?" He asked, worriedly. He pointed to a flower Moomin's tail was swinging near. A rose bush with a single, though beautiful, white rose was behind him. Moomin realized Snufkin was warning him about the thorns, and he turned to grab the flower. He held it gently in his paws, the thorns not able to prick him through his fur. The two sat in silence, admiring the perfect flower. Moomin slowly handed it to Snufkin, a light blush spread across his furry cheeks.

"Do you know what white roses mean Snufkin?" Moomin asked, looking away from his friend. Snufkin hummed and smelt the rose. He sighed and laid down next to Moomin, who looked back at the sky.

"It means heavenly virtue and unity." Snufkin replied.

"And pureness of a longstanding love." Moomin said, smiling, and continued his flower weaving.

For the next few months, when each others crowns would start to wilt they remade them. Snorkmaiden and Little My teased them mercilessly, but they didn't mind it. Moominmama would always grin as she watched the boys run about her garden. To see her Moomin so happy made her content. She'd hoped her son would take interest in courting with Snorkmaiden, but she could tell his heart was elsewhere. As long as he was happy, she was happy. But not the same could be said about Moominpappa. He would always bring up the "when I was your age" speeches when courting season came around. He didn't understand what Moominmama did, unfortunately.

"Snorkmaiden! Where have you been lately? It's courting season again you know,"

Moominpappa greeted her while she was on her way to the river with Sniff.

"Oh I know. I don't think I'm going to participate this year." She sighed, thinking about how much time Moomin had been sending with Snufkin this year.

"Now why is that?" She shrugged in response.

"Because Moomin already loves someone else!" Sniff shouted, quickly shutting his mouth, earning a glare from Snorkmaiden. Moominpappa froze for a moment before silently heading back into the house.

Moominmama was washing dishes when she heard Moominpappa groan from the living room.

"Is everything alright dear?" She called over behind her shoulder. She watched him sit down, placing his hat beside him on the table.

"Have you talked to Snorkmaiden lately? Apparently she's decided not to participate in courting this year, because of Moomin," He said not with anger but confusion. Moominmama put down her towel and sat beside him.

"If he discovered a new love interest why didn't he say anything?" He looked at Moominmama, who sighed and placed a paw on his shoulder.

"He's not new." She said, waiting until she saw the look of realization on his face.

"But-," Moominpapa said in minor disbelief.

"Let the boys be happy Moominpapa," She said, rubbing his back. He sighed and leaned his head on her shoulder.

"Come now, let's prepare for the spring festival tonight." She said as she returned to her cleaning.

After a hard day of cooking and putting up decorations around the Moomin house Moominmama was finally able to find her son and pull him aside.

"I see you've been reading that book I gave on flowers Moomin. How has Snufin liked them?" She smiled when she saw her son blush.

"H-he likes them very much. He always wears the crowns I make him." He looked away nervously.

"Now Moomin, I know you like him. I see the flowers he wears." Moomin's ears shot up and he stared at his mother with shock.

"B-but h-" He stuttered but before he could finish his mother pulled out a small bouquet of red roses.

"Give these to him. I think he'll enjoy them." She said with a wink. Moomin grinned and ran off with the flowers. He knew the festival started soon so he went and found a nice sweater and went to fetch Snufkin before it started.

When Moomin and Snufkin made their way to the party they could already hear the music from the bridge. Moomin gasped, remembering the flowers.

"Oh, Snufkin! I forgot something. Head to the party I'll be quick I promise!" He said as he started running towards the house. Snufkin was confused, but shrugged and started going towards the music and bright lights. Moomin grabbed the flowers off his bed and quickly went back outside to see Sniff dancing with Snorkmaiden, who was gesturing for Snufkin to join. Snufkin wasn't a dancer, nor a person who enjoyed the spotlight so he just shook his head and sat down on a random block of hay. Moomin smiled and sat next to him, flowers behind his back.

"Here you go Snuff!" He said holding the flowers out, blushing a little. Snufkin let out a small gasp and gently took the flowers. He suddenly hugged Moomin and kissed his cheek.

"Thank you Moomin." Moomin could almost feel his smile when Snufkin nuzzled against his neck fur. The two stayed sitting on the hay watching others dance under the stars. This really was the best spring festival ever.