F. J. Bergmann - Dalliance

My family have always been Flower Fairies. And by flowers I don't mean ugly things that are just technical flowers, like pinecones or broccoli, either. We live for beauty: petalled, pollen-dusted, perfumed—and polyploid if possible. Peonies are my favorites; I love to plunge into their soft nests of pink plumage. The first thing I always do is to squash all those icky ants.

Anyway, what I meant to say is that my family is Important. Even compared to other Flower Fairies. But the lower classes can be entertaining, and the zucchini-blossom fairy with the green wings I caught admiring the peonies was kind of cute, so I flirted with him and let him lead me out to the vegetable garden one cloudless afternoon when the peonies, in full sun, were getting really hot. He said there was cool, green shade under those enormous squash leaves, and he was right. And he was *so* adorable about pointing out an enormous gold-and-black striped spider and warning me not to get too close to its web. As if.

I had a lovely time pretending to ooh and ah over his drab organic compost, pointing to a bunch of mingy little tomato flowers and asking if he didn't think they looked just like tiny stars, and allowing him to practically give himself heatstroke bringing me dewdrops and nasturtium nectar and piles and piles of soft mullein leaves and velvety pansies until I finally decided the bed was comfy enough.

Afterward, he kept kissing me and running his hands up and down my skin and not listening to anything I said. I had to tell him I was hot and not to keep touching me like that about five times before he got the idea.

He was fun, for an afternoon, but he kept coming *back*. I mean, *really*? I'm sorry, but zucchini are *vegetables*. He imagined that I was going to let myself be seen with him. In. Public. I tried to let him down gently, but I finally had to be honest with him, and then I actually had to yell until some of Dad's yellowjackets came to ask if there was anything wrong.

But a week or two after that there was another heat wave, and I remembered that cool shade and those pretty wings. I flew all around the squash vines but didn't find him. Sweaty and pissed off, I finally gave up. On the way back, I glanced over at the spider's web. One end was weighted down by a silk-wrapped bundle. I could just see the faded tips of his green wings.

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