The Golem of Kararat

Anna’s Two Hearts

Far to the east lies Kararat, a village of David

A place where good people farmed and fished. Talked and traded

Many who were skilled artisans, with tools weighted

Actually, I have a clock from this town

It has a mechanical squirrel that runs around.

Kararat was a good place .. until the crackdown

The Lord and Bishop, who were known as unkind,

Charged into Kararat; looking for gold, horses, anything they could find

And Kararat had no wall to defend itself and too few spears assigned

Many were killed. The stables were burned

Every barrel in the brewery was stolen or overturned.

And the lord and the bishop were camped to close to be unconcerned.

The old men of Kararat, they handed out the spears and spades

Young archers clambered up hastily built barricades

And one sweet lass did everything, like a jack-of-all trades

Anna, oh Anna. Whose mother was a seamstress of very high repute

And whose father ran the mill, as it turned off the river shoot.

Anna went everywhere. Brave. Inquisitive. Astute

She checked on her neighbor, the Bottlewoman, that’s they called her

She was a strange old bird who traded in salves and the rare liquor

Anna found her .. and buried her under a great old fir

Anna explored the Bottlewoman’s house; it was an odd treasure trove of sorts

Dappled light played on bells and books, crockery and quartz

There were books in foreign languages and rare imports

But it was what Anna found under the Bottlewoman’s bed.

Wrapped in black leathers and thickly spun thread

When opened, lay scrolls topped with an engraved metal head

Anna went for more candlelight

Read the scrolls all through the night

And if what she learned was true, Kararat had a way to win their fight

Now, there are words which are wise but not solemn

That can show you how to make a false man, and control him

A bloodless man. A construct. A golem

Anna went to the carpenter borrowed his hammer and saw

Then to the tanner, bargained a hide for bear claw

And got to work with wood and iron, sweat and chutzpah

She built a wooden arm with a finely lined pulley

It was strong, and topped with steel to fight any bully

Then wrapped the whole thing in sheepskin, ragged and wooly.

The scroll was bizarre, and its instructions didn’t always align

Potion ingredients ranged from eye of newt to sweet red wine

And there was so much to do. And Anna, had so little time

A scream echoed down through the alley

Someone yelled, “The Lord and bishop have begun to rally!”

And Kararat was about to meet its finale

But then the clouds in sky opened to a storm

A torrent of rain and hail came down like a swarm

And to the Camp of Lord of the Bishop .. it did transform

The Road became mud

The river .. oh, how did it flood

And for a few days Kararat would shed no blood

It was the break Anna needed and she went straight to the task

Building the golem, its fingers, its legs and its mask

Until at the end of the scroll there was one question was left to ask…

There was hollow spot, on the last chart

The crucial piece to make it start

The beat of life. The heart

Now, the heart of a golem is like the heart of man

It inscribes in it more than mere lifespan

It it’s essence. The this that makes the that a than

Anna thought it as being a keystone

That which holds together, wood and steel or muscle and bone

And so she went outside -- into that rain drenched mess -- and found a grey speckled stone

She took the stone, carved as well as she could

And placed it in the golems chest, between the wires and wood

Then took a step back and said, “Arise Golem”. And ho, it stood

The contraption obeyed Anna’s commands, no matter the notion

Moved stiffly. Gave no eye contact. No emotion.

But it was as strong as an ox. Stronger. Big. And Full of devotion

Anna took her golem to the grey bearded commanders

Who cowered in fear when they got a gander

But the Golem, it ignored the bystanders

It raised a giant log to build a city wall

Stood eye to eye with the archers on top, he was that tall

But before he could finish, out came a dire call

The road was dry again and the lord and the bishop had begun their assault

Soon the sky darkened as a thousand arrow began the on onslaught

And a thunder of hooves followed and fought.

But the golem, yanked a tree from the ground, a great big fir

Swung it around, at where the knights were

And knocked two from their horses, in a great whirling blur

Together the men of Kararat charged into the battlefield

Fought sword to sword and shield to shield

And standing in front of them was Golem, big, strong and unwilling to yield

The lord’s bowmen shot at him, but the arrows did barely stick

And the Golem snatched the lord’s own lance, snapped it like a toothpick

After that, the cowardly Lord and Bishop rode away.. quick

The town saved. Huzzah! Kararat did celebrate

No child or grey beard will ever forget that famous date

When the Golem, and Anna, saved Kararat’s fate

Oh, can you imagine what the following days were like?

Guarded by a construct that moved lifelike

No one dared attack them. Not when the Golem could strike

And it could carry so much, at the simplest command

Tons of wood, boulders or bags of sand

Houses were rebuilt, both in the city and farmland

And Anna, oh Anna. She had many a suitor

And not just lovers, but wise men and princely tutors

Some wishing to learn from her, other’s .. recruit her

But Anna, she had her own plans

She ignored the wise suitors, and princely fans

Instead observed how her golem worked, with its stiff fingered hands

The Golem followed Anna’s commands, but only if it was a simple thing.

It could fight. And carry. Whatever you want it would bring

But what that if it could laugh and cry? Dance and sing.

Anna thought, what if there was a second Golem .. one with a heart of gold

Imagine the creature you would behold.

But that much gold could not be found in Anna’s household

Back into town Anna went forthwith

Dropped a quick note with the blacksmith

Then spoke to her elders of a new monolith

Everyone in the town donated all sorts of things.

Coins and necklaces. Melted down. Even wedding rings

This golden heart had the cost of a king

As soon as Anna put the golden heart in .. it opened its eyes

Moved its head back and forth; then on its own did rise

Turned to Anna, bowed and stayed submitted until she said, “Arise”.

This not what it was like when the stonehearted golem was made

It didn’t bow, I’m afraid

And if it was hiding any feelings they were never betrayed

But the gold-hearted golem, to Anna, he did embrace

Gold carried her like a queen, all over the place

And fine work it could do, first repairing her bookcase

While the Stone Golem fixed the bridge by the rive shore

Gold added a railing of beautiful décor

And when it was finished the Gold Golem sang a clickity-clak song, and received an encore

Anna’s renown and fame began to grow

Many would come to Kararat to see the Golem show.

There was so much, so many, wanted to know.

**2nd act**

Two season ensuing, a Sheppard Boy came knocking on Anna’s door

A young man, well traveled in the leathers of old folklore

With, slung over his shoulder, a wild shot bore

Anna saw him as soon as he walked through the door; he was easy on the eyes

But Anna was surrounded by .. a lot of other guys

And the poor Shepherd Boy could barely get a word in edgewise

And Anna saw him seemingly give up, turn and walk away

But he stopped and approached the golem whose heart is stone and grey

And the Shepherd Boy bowed, with respect to convey

And the Stone Golem returned with stiffly nodded head

And Anna saw in the Sheppard Boy eyes, someone whose soul has bled

And Anna, oh Anna, knew that she should be talking to him instead

He was short but strong and nimble, and the eldest of orphans

There were twelve of them and their bread was in small portions

They’d been attacked by the Lord and Bishop’s bad fortunes

Anna marched out the next day, with her Golems and the town guard

It would take week at best to reach his farmyard

But Anna didn’t mind, the Sheppard Boy sang songs like a bard

Three days later, and not much past dawn

The Lord and the Bishop were spotted crossing a river of white swan

And Anna met their eyes and said, “Come on!”

Brave men drew swords and charged through the streams

Anna and the Sheppard Boy flow side by side as a team

And the Golems turned so many swords into so screams

The Battle was short. The Lord and the Bishop were routed

The Sheppard boy joined with Anna and shouted

“No more will our people be looted!”

Delighted, they finished their journey and came to the farm

The children were scared; some had raised the alarm

But Sheppard Boy quieted them down, and some he had to disarm

Anna told the Stone Golem to go and rebuild their barn

And the gold golem spun them a rope yarn

And Shepherd Boy taught Anna all the kids’ names, from youngest to first-born

And Anna and her strapping young man

Had talks that ranged from the sheep his flock to far-off Japan

Anna liked hearing the Sheppard boy talk, and together they ran

There were tears in Anna’s eyes when she left the next day

Marching off with her people, with her heart held a sway

That night she covered her head and did deeply pray

And sometimes fate can follow love

Be it from someone up above

Or whoever can give it a little shove

Whoever it may be, a month later the orphan’s farm got a new priest

The old father had long been deceased,

And with the new father, to raise the children, the Sheppard boy could be released

When he reached Kararat, the gold golem rang the house bell

And Anna came running from her workshop, where she did dwell

And saw her Shepherd Boy, dressed in fine clothes, and her heart did swell

There’s probably more to tell about this

How they did embrace, and immediately kiss

Her lips stuck to his, filled with hot blood and bliss

They cuddled by the fire. Let the gold golem be their cook.

Gold got the better jobs. Stone was building a dam outside by the brook

And Sheppard boy brought out his sketchbook

Got charcoal from the fire

Drew Anna’s portrait, for only the two of them to admire

He was good. He could even sketch the golem’s plates and wire

He admired Anna’s craftsmanship

How pulleys held fingers with and iron hard grip

And the golems obeyed her “like your slave, but you have no whip.”

“Not like slave,” Anna replied, “You don’t understand.”

“The gold golem has loved me from before he could stand”

“I simply ask, I don’t have to demand”

“But how,” the Shepherd Boy inquired

“I understand how it is wired.”

“But what is the spark for that which life is required?”

Anna told him some but not all. Anna’s not stupid.

But neither was the Shepherd Boy, for his love was not from cupid

But from the Lord and The Bishop, his heart had been polluted

With Anna asleep the Sheppard boy crept down the stairs

Into her laboratory he went and through Anna’s wares

Took the golem scroll, and her notes from repairs

Foolishly the Sheppard boy grabbed at the tools and vials

And accidentally flipped on a mechanical time keeping dial

And sent the contents of Anna’s laboratory, falling and crashing into the aisle

Anna awoke and jumped out of her bed

She saw it was empty. Knew the Sheppard had fled

“Catch me that thief” to the golem, she said

And the gold golem grabbed the Shepherd Boy. That pretty ass liar

Held him by the wrist, with fingers of steel and wire

But unbeknownst to them all, downstairs, in the laboratory, had begun a great fire

The alchemicals were unnatural, and created a great smoke

Flames ran through the house, and more they did invoke

A great fire that were seen by all the townsfolk

And Anna, oh Anna, She arrived at the worst time

Reached her gold golem, and all around her the flames did climb

And a fear that I will not speak of or Rhyme

“Take me outside,” Anna screamed, “to the brook let me settle.”

But the price of love and riches is often set by the devil.

For gold, gold is a soft metal

Gold is easily worked, and does easily melt

And the fire around them, the heat that was dealt

A heat worse than flames is life when it’s heartfelt

The gold golem’s heart melted. It could not act.

And the house was aflame, barely intact.

And Anna, oh Anna, had lost hope. No. No, hope she did attract.

Her savior. The Stone golem burst through a wall

Took Anna outside wrapped in an old shawl

Then went back to save the others from the fireball.

Why did it go back for his brother? I do not know.

But as the house began to collapse, did he take his brother and throw

Saving him. While he, and the Shepherd Boy, were trapped in an inferno

And so this is how the story ends, with Anna all alone.

Searching through the ashes of all she did own

And looking for one thing that saved her. A heart of stone.