

PRETTY PEACH^[L]_[SEP]

and the Color-Matching Kaleidoscope

A Story About Colors

Once upon a time, there lived in Color Land a color lovelier than all other colors. They called her “Pretty Peach.” Everybody thought so.

Even Peach herself.

“I am so pretty!” she laughed, admiring herself from the top of her auburn hair to the tips of her flower sandals.

Now Pretty Peach lived with her parents, Mrs. White and Mr. Orange, on the edge of Rainbow Town. Mrs. White liked to keep everything spotless and clean. Mr. Orange was a jolly optimist.

One day Ma White said, “Peach, the time has come for you to find a husband.”

“But, Ma,” Peach said, tossing back her lovely auburn hair. “Is there a color out there who is handsome enough for me?”

“Never mind handsome,” Ma White said. “What you want is a color to *complement* you.”

“Complement me?” asked Peach.

“Yes,” Ma White said. “Now listen, daughter. For every color there is a complementary color. Your complement is a color that is in perfect harmony with you.”

Pa Orange nodded. “A color that complements you is the right match for you. Take me and Ma, for instance. When I get mad and feisty, your mother calms me down. And when *she* feels low, I cheer her up!”

“If both of you are hot-tempered,” Ma White told Peach. “you will *CLASH*. And that’s not good.”

“Now remember, Peach,” Pa Orange said, “there are suitors who will tell you sweet nothings, but these are just words. There are colors

who will promise you the rainbow, but promises are cheap.”

Ma White nodded. “And here’s the most important part. The color you’re going to marry must love you for who you truly are.”

“Love me for who I truly am?” asked Peach. “How will I know?”

“Here's how," answered Pa Orange. "You must hold all of your suitors up to the light. Only then will you see them in their true colors.”

“How in the world do I do that?” Peach wondered.

“Lucky you,” said Ma White, “your father invented a match-matching kaleidoscope.” She smiled at her daughter. “Wait there and see.”

Pa Orange left the room and came out again. He was carrying a large tube with a capped opening on one side. With a flourish, Pa Orange uncapped the opening and out popped three tiny heads with pointy ears. “Meet my helpers,” Pa Orange said, “the Color Pixies!”

The first pixie winked at Peach and said, “Hi, I’m Tomas Tint. I add white to a color, so you can see how he behaves when he turns lighter.”

The second pixie said, “I’m Sabina Shade. I add black to the color, so you can see how he reacts when he turns darker.”

And the third pixie said, “I’m Telesforo Tone, and I add gray to the color, just for fun!”

Then the three pixies all laughed at Peach before popping back inside the kaleidoscope.

“Listen carefully, Peach,” Pa Orange explained. “We colors change depending on the amount of light we get. Don’t you notice how our friends, the Pastels, behave differently when they’re indoors and when they’re outdoors? All colors look different under natural light and under artificial light.”

“And colors also look different when you place them beside *other* colors,” Ma White added. “Ever notice how the Pastels behave differently when you put them in the same room as the Primaries?”

Peach nodded.^[SEP]

“Now let me teach you how this works,” said Pa Orange.^[L]^[SEP]

And Peach watched and listened carefully as her Pa began to turn the kaleidoscope like a tumbler....

News that Pretty Peach was looking for a husband spread quickly around Color Land. Soon suitors from all over were coming to Rainbow Town to meet Pretty Peach. She and her parents lived in a house with a wide front porch at the bottom of a winding road. All Pretty Peach and her parents had to do was sit on the porch and wait.

The first color to come courting was Yellow.^[L]^[SEP]As soon as he arrived, the whole street lit up with sunshine.

“Hey, Pretty Peach,” Yellow drawled, taking off his dark shades. “You look mighty fine. What will it take to make you mine?”^[L]^[SEP]

“Mr. Yellow,” Peach smiled. “Are you mellow?”^[L]^[SEP]

“You bet I am! I make everybody happy. I just want to shine, shine, *shine!* You can stay home and do my laundry. I perspire a lot, you know.”

It was then that Pretty Peach said, “YELLOW, to prove you are the best, take the test!”^[L]^[SEP]

Without another word, Peach pushed Yellow inside the kaleidoscope! Round and round Yellow tumbled, and out he came in his true colors.

“Oh, YELLOW,” said Peach, greeting him on the other side. “I have seen your true colors. You are bright and cheerful, and you might make another color very happy someday. But I have plans to do more with my life than just stay home and do laundry. Sorry, but you are not the right match for me.”

As soon as Yellow left, the sky turned dark. A cluster of heavy clouds gathered at the top of the road. Trudging toward them, chased by clouds, was Gray.

When he got to the front porch, Gray politely took off his derby hat,

showing them his salt-and-pepper hair.

“Miss Peach, may I have your hand in marriage?” he asked as rain-water dripped from his dreary pants.

“Poor Mr Gray,” Peach said, “you got soaked along the way. Have you saved up for this rainy day?”

“Why, yes,” Gray answered. “I own a big quiet house with a large garden full of healthy plants and flowers. We will never lack for rain, dear!”

It was then that Pretty Peach said, “GRAY, to prove you are the best, take the test!”

Without another word Peach shoved Gray inside the Kaleidoscope. Round and round Gray tumbled, and out he came in his true colors.

“Oh, GRAY,” Peach said, greeting him on the other side. “I have seen your true colors. You are gentle and kind, and you get along with everybody. Here’s the problem. I don’t want to live the rest of my days under an umbrella! Sorry, but you are not the right match for me.”

Soon after Gray left, Peach and her parents heard music floating from the top of the road.

“Oh my, it’s Blue!” cried Peach. “Will he be true?”

Blue reached the Pastels’ front porch with a swagger in his step and a trumpet in his arm.

“Ain’t you a peach,” he said, winking at Peach.

Peach blushed and looked down. And she saw that Blue was wearing the coolest topsider shoes!

“Tell me,” Blue said, raising his trumpet. “Do you like jazz?”

“Well, I—“

Before Peach could answer, Blue raised the trumpet to his lips and let out a blast of notes.

“The sooner you marry me the sooner I’ll take you away from this dump!” Blue said, looking around him. “Stick with me, baby. You and I

are going a loooooOONG way!” And he blew loudly on his trumpet again.

It was then that Pretty Peach said, “BLUE, to prove you are the best, take the test!”

Without another word Peach shoved Blue inside the Kaleidoscope. Round and round Blue tumbled, and out he came in his true colors.

“Oh, BLUE,” Peach said, greeting him on the other side. “I have seen your true colors. Not only are you the color of the sky on a sunny day, you are also a fine musician. But I love Rainbow Town, and I want to live close to my Ma and Pa. Sorry, but you are not the right match for me. Besides, I like salsa music!”

Everybody was wondering: *Who could be next?*^[SEP]

VROOM! VROOM! VROOM!^[SEP]

They heard him before they saw him.

Chugging down the road in a shiny sports car—was RED.^[SEP]As soon as he reached the front porch, Red winked at Peach and handed her a bunch of red roses and a box of chocolates.^[SEP]

“Hello, doll!” said Red, taking off his flashy leather jacket.^[SEP]

Peach swooned.^[SEP]

“I think you’ll do very well,” Red said. “Pretty Peach, you can iron my clothes! Cook my meals! Clean my house! Er, I mean *our* house, of course.”

“Why are you yelling?” asked Peach.

“This is my normal voice,” Red said, grumpily. “Well, what’s it going to be? Make up your mind. Will you be my wife???”

It was then that Pretty Peach said, “RED, to prove you are the best, first take the test!”

Without another word Peach pushed Red inside the Kaleidoscope. Round and round RED tumbled, and out he came in his true colors.

“Oh, RED,” Peach said, greeting him on the other side. “I have seen

your true colors. Life with you must be very exciting. But it is *too* exciting. I couldn't possibly keep up! Besides, I want a husband who will share everything with me, and that includes household chores. Sorry, but you are not the right match for me."

The next day, Peach waited on the front porch. Her parents searched the horizon, but no other color appeared at the top of the hill.

"Oh Pa," said Peach, almost in tears. "Will I *ever* find a husband?" "

"Don't cry, dear," Pa Orange said. "True love is worth the wait."

Just then they heard someone whistling a happy tune from up the road. As soon as he came into view, Peach laid eyes on a color so handsome she nearly fell off her flower sandals.

"Hello, Peach," he said, skipping up the porch steps. "Do you remember me?"

Peach stared at the new color, blinking twice.^[SEP]

"I'm Aqua," he said.^[SEP]

Suddenly Peach remembered! She and Aqua had played together when they were kids. *Oh my*, Peach thought, *how tall and confident he'd grown!*

Aqua smiled. His eyes were the color of two swimming pools. Peach thought she could swim in those blue pool eyes for a long time, all the way to the deep end. She was *in love!*

Peach and Aqua spent the day together, laughing and talking just about anything and everything.

"They look good together," Mrs. White whispered, giving Pa Orange a wink.

As the day drew to a close, Ma ran to her mother, her eyes aglow with love. "He's the one for me, Ma!" she cried.

Turning to her father she said, "I know in my heart he is my true love, Pa!"

"Nothing doing," said Pa Orange. "Even someone as handsome as

Aqua cannot escape my kaleidoscope test.”

“Aw, Pa, Aqua doesn't need to take the test,” Peach reasoned. "Isn't it enough that I love him?"

“No exceptions, daughter!” Mrs. White said.

So, Peach went back to Aqua with a heavy heart and said, “AQUA, to prove you are the best, first you must take my dad’s silly test.”

But just as she got ready to push Aqua inside the kaleidoscope, something happened. Aqua did a quick sidestep and pushed Peach in herself!

“Goodness me,” Peach cried in surprise. "Could this really be happening???" Yes! Round and round Peach tumbled in her father’s kaleidoscope, and out she came in her true colors.

“Miss Peach, now I see you for what you truly are,” Aqua said, greeting her on the other side.

“What did you see? Does this mean you won’t marry me?” Peach asked, afraid of what she might hear.

“Pretty Peach,” he said, “Being with you makes me so happy.”

Then Aqua got down on one knee and said, “Peach, you and I belong together. I promise to love and honor you even when I fade and peel. Will you be my wife?”

“Absolutely!” Peach shouted, jumping into his arms.

“But how did you know about the test?” she asked, pointing to her dad’s kaleidoscope.

“Oh, that,” Aqua laughed. “Well, my dad is Blue, and Mom is Green,” he said, pointing to a couple standing a few feet away. They were both smiling at Peach and carrying a kaleidoscope that looked very much like Pa Orange's. Aqua gave Peach's parents a wink and said, “*They* wanted to be sure that Peach was the right color for me!”

That year Rainbow Town held a wedding that is still talked about in Color Land.

Peach and Aqua had lots of babies. And they lived happily ever

after in harmony, complementing each other for the rest of their lives.