

PAGE
Classics Collection
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Ivan Tavčar
**Blossoms in
Autumn**

Adapted by Mateja Meh





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Ivan Tavčar

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Introduction

Ivan Tavčar wrote the story

Blossoms in Autumn.

The story talks about love
between a man and a woman.

The man lives in a city,
the woman lives in a village.

The man is older than the woman.

The story has a sad ending.

People in the story

John

John lives in a city.

He is 38 years old.

John is a lawyer and he works in an office.

He is very busy.

John used to live in a village.

He was happy when he lived in a village.

John is not happy in the city.

In the city, John often remembers moments from his life in the village.

John misses village life.

Daisy

Daisy lives in a village called Jelovo brdo.

She is 17 years old.

Daisy's parents are Bastian and Barb.

She is a farm girl.

Helen

Helen lives in the city.

Helen is John's friend.

John trusts Helen.

Daniel

Daniel is a farmhand at Presenik farm.

He helps with the hard work on the
Presenik farm.

Liza

Liza is a servant at the Presenik farm.

She helps with the housekeeping
and farm work at Presenik farm.

Bastian and Barb

Bastian and Barb are husband and wife.

They have a daughter, Daisy.

Their family name is Presenik.

They have a farm.

Bastian is John's cousin.

Kathy

Kathy works in a pub.

She is the pub owner's daughter.

In the garden in Ljubljana

John lives in Ljubljana.

Ljubljana is the capital city of Slovenia.

John has a lot of friends who are women.

One day John and his friends

sit in a garden in Ljubljana.

They drink coffee and talk about things.

John reminds his friends,

that they married for money.

He tells his friends

that most people do not know true love.

His friends do not like
what John is saying.
They get angry.
They tell John
that they love their husbands.
John answers
That true love is very rare.

John shares a secret with his friends
that he experienced true love
when he was 38 years old.
John starts telling his friends
his love story.

John's story

My story starts,
when I was 38 years old.
I lived in the city.
I had a good job and money.
But I was not happy.
I did not have love,
so, my life was boring.
I missed village life.

One day I met a colleague of mine.

His colleague was rude to me.

He said:

John, you are so alone.

Get married, already.

I was even more sad
because of his words.

Then I remembered my friend Helen.

I thought Helen was
the most beautiful lady in the city.

I could talk to Helen
about many different things.

Her kind words always calmed me down.

I visited Helen.

I shared a secret with her
that I was not happy.

Helen told me:

**People sometimes say
that you visit our house too often.
Our daughter is old enough to get
married.**

**Perhaps they think that you like her.
It is not proper
that you visit us anymore.**

Helen hurt me with those words.
I was sad and left.

On my way home
I met a doctor,
who was not nice to his patients.

The doctor said to me:
You do not look well.
What are you doing?

I told him that I am ill.

The doctor replied:
You are not ill.
You work too much and eat too much.
You got fat.
John, go to the hills.
Walk a lot.

I thought of my cousin Bastian,
Who lives in a village called Jelovo brdo.
Bastian has a farm on Jelovo brdo,
I visited there a long time ago.
I decided to visit
my cousin Bastian at his farm.

I knew,
that my cousin Bastian would be happy to
see me.
Bastian wrote me many letters,
in those letters he asked me to visit him.

Visiting cousin Bastian in Jelovo brdo

I always felt good in the village.
When I came to Jelovo brdo,
I remembered my childhood.

When I was a child,
I spent a lot of time outdoors.
I caught birds and fish,
and I was a shepherd.

In Jelovo brdo I visited
my cousin Bastian and
his wife Barb.
Bastian and Barb have a farm.

Presenik farm
is big and well organized.
The Presenik family are rich farmers.

When I entered the house,
I saw Liza and Daniel.
Liza and Daniel were farmhands.
Liza and Daniel loved each other,
but they often fought.
They fought,
because Liza was saving money,
and Daniel spent all the money on drink.
They also fought that time.

Bastian and Barb welcomed me warmly.
I told them that I am going to stay
at their farm for a while.
They were happy.

In the evening, we had dinner.
We all sat at one table.
Everyone got a big wooden spoon.
We all ate from one bowl.
First, we ate boiled potatoes,
then we ate dumplings.

I asked Barb, Where is Daisy?

Barb replied,

She ate her dinner at the stove.

I believe

she is a bit shy because you are here.

Bastian said,

Daisy is cranky.

When she is cranky,

she is not good company.

Barb said,

Bastian, be nice to Daisy.

Daisy is not well.

She gets angry easily.

Then I saw Daisy.

I thought she was very beautiful.

I said to Daisy:

Come here, Daisy.

She answered quietly:

I am coming.

She came to the table

and sat on a chair.

I looked at her.

She looked away quickly.

She had a very beautiful face.

Her blonde hair was braided.

I liked her.

I could not show her that,

because she was a lot younger than me.

Daisy said one thing to me:

Shave your beard.

Only animals have hair

all over their face.

After dinner I went to my room.

The window in my room was open.

I breathed in the fresh mountain air.

I felt very nice.

I slept well and

I woke early in the morning.

We had oatmeal for breakfast.

In the old days

people in the village ate porridge often.

Now, young people do not eat porridge.

I like porridge.

No food in the city is as good
as porridge in the village.

After breakfast, Bastian, Daniel
and I went out to cut some grass.
We went to the meadow.
The meadow was full of flowers.
There were spiders in the meadow,
they were spinning their webs.
There was dew on the spider webs.

Drops of dew were sparkling.
I heard birds singing.
It was all very beautiful.

Bastian, Daniel, and I
stood next to each other
and started to cut the grass.

We used scythes.

A scythe is a farm tool for cutting grass.

Daniel was showing off.

He said to me,

**Let's compete
and see, who cuts faster.**

I liked Daniel's idea of competing.

We started to cut the grass.

At first, I cut the grass badly.

Then I started to cut better than Daniel.

I was faster than him.

Daniel got angry.

He threw his scythe on the ground.

Daisy and Liza
Also came to the meadow.
They brought lunch.
There was yoghurt
and brown bread for lunch.

Daisy whispered:
**Come with me,
and I will show you something.**

Daniel noticed
that Daisy had whispered something.
He started making fun of us.
He told us:
**John and Daisy,
sitting in a tree,
wishing for a family.**

Daisy any I went to a nearby creek.
We walked through the meadow and
between trees.
It was peaceful near the creek.
The views were beautiful.

Daisy took the scarf from her head
and then untied the scarf
she wore around her neck.
She threw both scarves in the grass.

Daisy turned to me.
She rolled up her sleeves.
She told me,
that she would show me,
how to catch trout in the creek.

Daisy asked me
to catch some grasshoppers for her.
Grasshoppers were bait for the trout.
Then she lay on a stone next to the creek.
She put her hands under the stone.

She told me
that she touched a trout.
At that time,
she lifted her leg high in the air.
She did not know
that she showed some bare skin.

Then I noticed
that Daisy is no longer a child.
Daisy is a young girl.

We returned to Presenik farm.

The Mass and the fair

It was Sunday.

Bastian and Barb, Daniel and Liza
had already left to go to church.

I was waiting for Daisy in front of the
house,
so that we could go together.

I wore shorts,
knee high socks, a jacket and a hat.
I thought
that I was dressed nicely.

When Daisy came from the house,
she started laughing.
Daisy laughed so hard
that she had tears in her eyes.

Daisy said to me:

**Everyone will laugh at you
if they see you dressed like that.**

So, I went to change my clothes.

I only kept the hat,
because Daisy liked it.

Daisy was dressed very nicely.

She wore a light grey skirt.

She had a blue scarf on her head.

She wore a green scarf around her neck.

I liked Daisy a lot.

I especially liked the green scarf
that Daisy wore around her neck.

That scarf was soft and beautiful.

It suited her very much.

I liked
that Daisy did not dress like the ladies in
cities.

Women in cities wear hats
and colourful shoes.

We were late.
We were the last to arrive at the church.

At mass I remembered
that my mother always took me
to this church on our holidays.
At that time, I thought the church was
magical.
The church seemed different now.
I thought:
Too bad I am not a child anymore.

After church, we went to a fair with Liza and Daisy.

I bought scarves for Daisy and Liza,
I bought Daisy and Liza some sweets
and a heart made from sweet bread.
I bought Daisy a bigger heart
with more beautiful decorations.

Then the party started.
I asked Daisy to dance with me.
We danced.
Other people watched us.
Daisy leaned on me.
I could feel
how her heart was beating.

On our way home, Daisy often told me:
It was very nice.

The next day I walked past Daisy's room.
In her chest of drawers
I noticed the heart made of sweet bread,
which I had bought for her at the fair.

A letter from Ljubljana

One day I received a letter from
Ljubljana.

There was no post office in the village,
so, I picked the letter up from the village
pub.

It was written in the letter
that a lot of work was waiting for me at
my office.

I knew
that I would have to go back to Ljubljana.

Kathy spoke to me in the pub.

Kathy worked in the pub.

I ordered wine.

Kathy chatted with me.

When I looked towards the door,
I saw Daisy.

Daisy said angrily:

**Mother says
that you should come home.**

Then she turned around quickly
and slammed the door angrily.

When I walked out of the pub,
I saw Daisy.

She was waiting for me.

She said to me:

**We are waiting for you at home,
and you are sitting in a pub.**

At dinner, Daisy was still angry at me.
Her scarf was tied in such a way
that it covered half her face.
Daisy did not speak during dinner.

We ate a simple dish made from flour and
water.

The dish was similar to porridge.

We all ate from one bowl.

There was a bunch of pork crackling
in the middle of the bowl.

While we were eating,

Daisy offered me some of her crackling.

So I knew,

she was not so angry.

After dinner, Daisy went to her room
without saying a word.

When I washed myself,
It was already late.
I decided
that I would talk to Daisy.

I took a ladder,
which was standing near the barn.
I leaned the ladder
onto the window of Daisy's room.
I climbed up the ladder to the window.
I knocked on the window
and quietly called:
Daisy, are you sleeping?

Daisy opened the window.
She was wrapped in a long scarf.
She was red in the face.

She was shaking a lot.

She asked:

My God, why did you come?

What will mother say?

I said to her:

I cannot sleep,

because you are angry with me.

Daisy said to me:

You know,

I am not angry with you anymore.

I asked her

why she was angry.

She told me that she was angry,

because I spoke to Kathy.

I asked Daisy:

Are you still angry with me?

Can you give me your hand?

Daisy gave me her hand.

I felt her soft fingers.

I wished

that I could hold her hand for a long time.

But Daisy gently pushed me away

and said:

Good night.

When I climbed down the ladder,
Daniel stepped from the shadows.
Daniel laughed at me.
He said nothing.
He took the ladder and put it away.

The next day at lunch I noticed
That everyone knew about
my meeting with Daisy late at night.

A hike on Blegoš mountain

Time passed.

Autumn came.

At Presenik farm

we started preparing for winter.

We cut the grass and shrubs,
to prepare winter bedding for the
animals.

We raked the leaves.

We cut some trees in the forest.

We chopped the trees down
to make firewood for the farm for winter.

I received more letters from Ljubljana.

I knew

that I would have to go back
to the city soon.

Before I returned to Ljubljana
I wanted to hike to a nearby mountain
called Blegoš.

At dinner, I told everyone
that I will go to Blegoš in the morning.

Daisy wanted to go with me.

Bastian was against it.

Barb said
that she can go.

The next morning,

Daisy and I went to Blegoš.

We walked through the forest
and picked hazelnuts.

We competed as to
who would pick more.
Daisy picked more hazelnuts than me.
She was happy.

I made a plan.
I will tell Daisy,
about how I feel about her.
That I am in love with her.
That I wish
she would become my wife
and that we would live together
in the city.
I waited for a chance
to tell her all that I wanted.

Daisy found two strawberries in the forest.

She also found a white blossom.

Daisy ate one strawberry,
she gave one strawberry and the blossom
to me.

I ate the strawberry,
I put the blossom in my wallet.

Daisy said:

Throw the flower away.

I did not want to throw the flower away.

I said to Daisy:

**This blossom will remind me of you,
when I am in the city.**

We came to the top of Blegoš mountain.
Daisy was tired,
but she enjoyed the view.
We could see a very long ways.

Daisy said:
There is Ljubljana,
where you live.

She asked me quietly:
When will you come again?
I was joking when I said:
I will come to your wedding.

My words made Daisy angry.
She looked away from me.
Tears started running down her cheeks.

I wanted to comfort Daisy.

I said to her:

Let's pick some flowers.

Daisy picked a bunch of flowers.

She said:

I will keep this bunch of flowers.

It will remind me of this day.

We sat in the grass.

We ate brown bread, dried plums and
walnuts.

Then Daisy fell asleep.

I watched her
and thought about my plan.
How I could tell Daisy
that I loved her.

I decided,
not to rush things.
I will not tell her just yet.

Leaving for Ljubljana

I said goodbye to Bastian,
Barb, Daniel and Liza.

They said to me
that I should come again.
They gave me presents.

Daisy walked with me.
She carried walnuts,
plums and some sausages in a scarf.
She was quiet and sad.
She felt like crying.

Halfway there, we sat on the ground.
We did not want to be apart, just yet.
Daisy placed the scarf on the grass.

She said to me:

Eat.

I ate.

Daisy asked me:

Is it hard for you in Ljubljana,

because you are alone?

You have nobody,

to cook for you and wash your clothes.

Who will help you,

when you get ill?

I said:

Where can I get a woman to cook for

me?

I do not want an old cook,

and I cannot get a young one.

I noticed
that Daisy got angry.

Daisy said to me:
**Sometimes city men
take a woman relative to live with them
and she helps them.**

I answered to her:
**Where could I find such a relative?
If she is young,
will she not want to come?**

I also added:

**You do not know the city
and the people in the city.**

People in the city

Often speak badly about other people.

**If you stayed with me
in the city for a while,
you would soon see
how mean people get.**

**I think,
you would not even dare
to go on the street,
because you would be so ashamed.**

Daisy blushed
and said angrily:

Who talks about me?

She ran away and
started picking flowers in the meadow.

When she returned,
she was holding a bunch of flowers.
There were tears in her eyes.

I said to her:

Daisy, it is time for me to go.

She asked me
to wait a while.
But I had to go.
I said to her:
Shake my hand to say goodbye.
Let's promise
that we will think about each other.

Daisy gave me her hand and said:
I will think of you.

At that moment, I could not take it
anymore.
I hugged her.
I kissed her on her face and mouth.
She did not stop me.

I left.

A few moments later I turned back.

Daisy was standing still.

She was holding a bunch of flowers from
the meadow.

John buys Mlakan's farm

When I returned to Ljubljana,
I missed everyone from the village.
I missed the mountain air and
the people in Jelovo brdo.

It was hard to watch women in the city.
I did not like their clothes.
I kept thinking of Daisy.
At night, I dreamt
that we were together in Jelovo brdo.

One day Daniel walked into my office.
He came with a man
that I did not know.

Daniel said to me:

This is Mlakan from Jelovo brdo.

Daniel also told me

that he was not a farmhand
at Presenik farm anymore.

He also told me

that Liza married another man.

I remembered

that I knew Mlakan.

Mlakan had a big farm.

Mlakan also had debts.

He did not have the money
to pay off his debts.

So, he wanted to sell his farm
and move to America.

Daniel also wanted to move to America.

Daniel and Mlakan tried to convince me
to buy Mlakan's farm.

We talked for a long time.

In the end, I decided:

I will buy Mlakan's farm.

I will go back to Jelovo brdo.

John returns to Jelovo brdo and asks Daisy to marry him

I walked towards Jelovo brdo.

I felt good.

I knew

what I would do.

I went to Bastian and

his wife Barb.

I said to them:

I bought Mlakan's farm.

I am moving to Jelovo brdo.

I will get married here.

Bastian warned me
that farm work was hard.
He asked me
where I would find a wife.

I asked Bastian and Barb quietly:
**If you let me,
I will take Daisy as my wife.**

Bastian was so surprised
that his pipe fell from his mouth.
Barb said:
**We will be pleased
if you take Daisy as your wife.**

I said to them
that I must ask Daisy first,
if she even wants to be my wife.

Daisy was sorting beans in the house.
She was very thin and sad.
I stepped towards her and said:
I am back again.

Daisy was surprised
when she saw me.

I told her
that I was bored in Ljubljana and
that I bought Mlakan's farm.

I said to her:

I am going to get married.

Daisy got scared.

She became pale in the face.

She thought

that I would marry Kathy.

I leaned close to Daisy

and I whispered to her:

**Your father and your mother will be
pleased if we get married.**

Then I asked her:

Will you marry me?

Daisy looked at me.

She was surprised.

She could not answer.

I asked her again:

Daisy, will you marry me?

Daisy said very quietly:

Me?

I said to her:

Yes, you, Daisy.

I only want you to be my wife.

Tell me,

do you want to be my wife?

She still could not talk.
She nodded and hugged me.
I felt her arms around my neck.
She pressed her cheek against mine.

I said to her:

**We will be husband and wife for all our
lives.**

We were hugging each other.

Daisy was crying and
she kept saying:

Husband and wife for all our lives.

Husband and wife for all our lives.

Husband and wife for all our lives.

Daisy was hugging me.
Suddenly her arms fell.

Her face became pale and
her eyes were wide open.
Daisy died in my arms.

Later the doctors said
that Daisy had a heart problem.
But I think
that she died because she was too happy.

I was very sad.
I went back to Ljubljana.

In the garden in Ljubljana

When John finishes telling his story,
he tells his friends,
that he still misses Daisy and
that he goes to Jelovo brdo every year.

He also tells his friends:

I never forgot Daisy and

I never met another woman

like Daisy.

That is why I never got married.

His friends do not believe his words.

John says to them:

Dear friends.

I told you a story

which I wanted to tell for a long time.

I told you what was painful for me and

what I carried in my heart for such a

long time.

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