



POOR DEAD ROSE

by Ben Amato

To grow from a bud, to bloom and open your beauty to the world is the goal of every living thing. To be captured, clipped and imprisoned for attaining that, is a crime against all of nature. I'm trapped within these glass walls, doomed to a slow decay.

I've always been aware and alive, in tune with life around me. With open arms, I embraced the spring sun and swayed in summer breezes. Then he walked by. I spread out my beauty to entice, enthrall and impress.

He ripped me from my home, uprooted me. Since then I've merely survived, brought from one setting to the next, to accent, accessorize or embellish. Adoring comments revitalize my waning life, but those words faded, just as I did.

He cared once. That showed in his attentiveness. Now I am forgotten, wilted, waiting to be tossed aside. I lack the strength to stand up to his sad, quick glances. So I slouch, weaken and give in to the dusk.

My scent, once hypnotic, now is bitter and angry. In that mirror on the wall I can see only my sad reflection. And that feeds my anger, for I sense in his fleeting gaze, that it is only a matter of time until I will be replaced.

I will not survive. That was clear from the moment he reached for me. I once bloomed but was cut down for that crime. I will find the strength to make him to pay for his.

When the police arrived at the Benders, they found a familiar scene. Harold, age 62, was in the garden, the clippers buried deep in his back. His third wife Rose, age 29, was in the bathtub. Her slashed wrists were barely visible in the blood stained water. The rest of the mansion was spotless, shining perfect in a glass and chrome sort of way. The only other thing out of place was a single red flower - dead - on the dining room table.