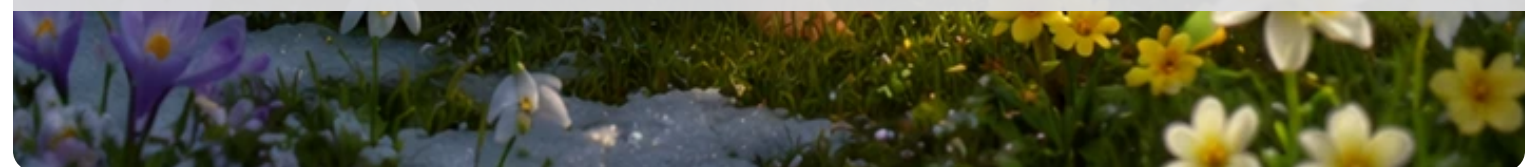




The Girl of Spring

viktorija Shkurda





Vesna wakes from a long slumber beneath a blanket of silver frost. As she opens her eyes, the cold air begins to soften and the first rays of golden light dance upon her hair.



With every step she takes across the frozen ground, the snow melts away to reveal tiny, brave snowdrops. Her emerald dress trails behind her, leaving a path of fresh green grass in the silent woods.



She reaches a frozen brook and gently touches the thick ice with her fingertips. A musical cracking sound echoes through the trees as the water begins to sparkle and flow once more.



Vesna finds a deep cave where a large bear is still dreaming of winter. She whispers a warm melody into the shadows, and the bear stirs, blinking at the new scent of damp earth and honey.



High in the branches of the willow trees, she weaves a crown of soft catkins and yellow primroses. The trees shiver with delight, turning from grey to a vibrant, misty green under her care.



A flock of swallows returns from the distant south, chirping excitedly as they find their way home. They circle around Vesna, fluttering their wings in a joyful dance that fills the sky with music.



She enters a sleepy village where children are peeking out of their windows, longing for the sun. As she passes by, colorful tulips and daffodils burst into bloom in every garden, painting the town with joy.



In the center of a wide meadow, Vesna begins to dance, spinning faster and faster. The brown earth transforms into a lush carpet of clover, and the air fills with the sweet perfume of wild lilies.



She reaches out to touch the gnarled branches of an old apple orchard. Within moments, delicate white and pink blossoms cover the trees like a soft, fragrant cloud.



As the sun climbs high in the sky, Vesna stands atop a hill, looking over the vibrant world she has awakened. With a happy sigh, she watches the butterflies take flight, knowing that spring has finally arrived.