

Mud Still Tastes Like Mud

by

Vixxy Fox

“Back in the day,” Scanectity said slowly, “If a girl liked you some, she’d make you a mud pie.”

Toby stopped rocking and looked at his foster father suspiciously. “I think you’re pulling my tail Pa.”

They were sitting upon the front porch. The evening was nice with just a touch of cold in the air which made their after dinner coffee truly hit ‘the spot’.

“Now I know you know I have done that before and even then it was only in good fun; but this time I’m serious. I remember watching you playing the mud when you thought no one was looking. You even had a playmate with you, and though you might’a seemed a bit old to do so, I know for a fact you were making mud pies.”

“It was Joey Beaver, Pa, and he was showing me how they use mud to dam up the streams and make their homes.”

Scanectity sipped at his coffee and winked at the young Bull. “And if’n it had been a female Beaver, not that they don’t cotton to Bulls, and if she had offered you a mud pie, I’m here to tell you, ‘Do not eat that pie no matter what’.”

Toby had matured over the few years he’d been living with the Skunks, and unlike Junior Skunk, he was no longer all that gullible. He did, however, have to bite on this warning like a big mouth bass on a worm. “Why?”

“Why what?” his father asked him with a straight face.

“Why would she give me a mud pie in the first place, and why would I eat it if she did?”

Scanectity, sitting on the porch swing, stopped its motion and set his cup on the table next to him. “She’d give it to you because she liked you. Her mama, you see, would have taught her that the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach... meaning... if she’s a good cook, she’s an asset not a liability.”

“Lie-a...” the Bull began and then repeated it a few more times trying to wrap his tongue around the word.

“Liability,” Scanectity finished for him. “It’s a negative value in a relationship. It means, if she can’t cook there’s a good chance you could starve to death, or worse; get poisoned by something she made for you ‘special’.”

“Lord have mercy,” the Bull muttered, his eyes becoming larger, “Poisoned?”

Scanectity nodded his head and tipped his hat back like a veteran fisherman working a really big one to the shore. “Know’n how to cook is a huge deal. Let’s say all the love of yor life can do is make porridge. Now you really love this gal and no way do you want to hurt her feelings so you eat the porriage, and eat the porriage, and eat the porriage. Next thing ya know, you’re sneaking off to the village tavern and not for a beer either. It’s so you can maybe get a decent meal under your belt.”

“But why would I eat a mud pie? Mud’s not edible.”

The old Skunk sighed. “It’s a mating ritual, son. Your girl is too young yet to cook for real, so she makes you a mud pie. If’n you really really like her, you’ll take a bite of that pie and smile the biggest smile ever you smiled while telling her how delicious it is.”

“But it’s not edible.”

“You tell her that and she’s gonna run home crying to her Mama. Next thing you know and her Pa’s gonna be over banging on the door wondering where you are so he can yell at you real good for hurting his poor girl’s feelings.”

Toby’s mouth fell open. “Nooooooo... what am I gonna do?”

“Well, sir,” the Skunkish father told him, “Seems you don’t really have anything to worry about being that you don’t have a girl friend yet.”

“And then again,” said another voice, “Mud pies are actually only for the very young children; of which you are not one, Tobie.”

The Bull looked up and found his mother Skunk looking down at him. She was holding two plates, one of which she passed to him. On it was a very large slice of blueberry pie. She’d obviously heated it in the oven.

“Be careful, it’s hot,” she told him. “If you ever find yourself the right girl, and she doesn’t know how to cook, you have her come see me and I’ll teach her real good.”

“I will Mama,” he replied with a big smile. “I think Pa is very lucky to find a gal like you. You’re such a good cook.”

“Oh he knew from the beginning what a good cook I was... not to mention I was also a fair bit prettier back then...”

“Here now!” her husband interrupted. “You’re just as pretty as the day we first met.”

She smiled a big smile and handed the second plate to him. He smiled just as big and accepted his desert.

Toby had already taken three good bites and had blueberry all over his lips. “It’s really good Ma,” he said while wiping his mouth with the back of his free paw.

Scanectity immediately took this news to heart and dug in. Toby was then quite surprised when the old farmer spit it out just as quick. “THAT TASTS LIKE...”

“MUD!” Bella told him. “And since I made it for you special, you have to smile the biggest smile ever you smiled and tell me how delicious it is.”

They all laughed, Scanectity having to acknowledge he’d been had (a very rare occurrence) and then two proper pieces of blueberry pie were produced and Bella joined them.

Tasting mud is tasting mud, and we all have to eat a bit of it in our time on this here earth; but life certainly is wonderful when love is share round like a good pie.