

## Indiana Mississippi Seed

Bleu hailed from a tiny mushroom cap of a town in Indiana named after cheese...Munster to be exact. Everyone's home towns have an impact on their lives, what they become and how they view the world. Bleu saw so many contradictions in her world...in her life.

Her seeds of the early years were like bright yellow dandelion cups, not sure if she was a flower or a weed and when she hit twenty she had to get out. She was tuning into that mysterious puffball, just ready to explode so she set her sails for Chicago, parachuting herself right into the inner city to re-seed on an urban trail. The streets of Nelson Algren and B.B. King would be her yellow brick road.

Relationships came and went, friends moved on with their lives; she made the rounds from neighborhood to neighborhood always intent on two things- to become a musician and a writer. It was more than a mantra, it was a long quest. As the years shed their manuscript pages and her old neighborhoods became chic and hip songs, she too had invested in the minimum wage hours and collegiate tides of life. Many tears, smiles and sloppy nights of angry words and promises at midnight...all culminated in her constant pursuit of "makin' it," "gotta be famous", "gotta get published", "want to be legit." Then it just occurred to her, like most things do... *the answer was always there...*

Fame is like a 5th Graders Dream...she'd been close to it and she saw it for what it was...better in fantasy than reality but somehow she was on the way to something, she could feel it. She was becoming that person she had dreamed of in her bed at night back in Munster, when she'd lie there, headphones on listening to her favorite bands, moon glow mocking her sleepy eyes. Wishing like voodoo curse turned into a prayer that she could "make it there," somewhere... beside here.

Bleu was older now, she had a slight furrow to her brow and her body was softer- hair dye wasn't as optional as it had been in her Ziggy Stardust youth.

The fear of performing never left her, which is why she did very little of it, over and over she heard herself giving excuses and turning down more engagements to perform than she'd say yes to. She was very, very critical of her music and writing and most of the time it felt like a heavy laborious marriage instead of a lusty relationship. SO why after all these years of gnashed teeth, fists in the air, prayers like a rueful chant, everyday and every night...why did she keep trying? She kept getting in the ring, knocked on her ass by her own shadow, getting back in to do battle, facing her fears, over and over like a tormented beast coming back to the scene of its discontent...she just couldn't give the fuck up?!

Finally she self published to no-ado and her CD and book sat quietly on people's shelves, in backpacks, in car glove compartments and next to toilets in the reading racks but very few people listened or opened the book. People are busy and in her CD there was such a plethora of sounds people often gave up before they had even began- she wasn't arrogant, she knew she needed a producer for her music and an editor for her book, she realized she couldn't do it all...

So she sang in little out of the ways bars, then little by little she told people she knew, "I'm playing out, come hear me!" She told herself, say YES, whatever you are asked to do on this trail...this road, this life...start saying yes, be open to whatever the experience may bring.

And one summer evening, in a garden on the corner of a converted lot, with Dragon Flies dodging the stars and the sun setting like a pumpkin in the mist...she began to sing, like she always did, focused on getting the songs just right...her bass player smiling, and suddenly a drummer jumped in and began following her songs, *songs he'd never even heard*. When she finally felt the terror cease, when she looked up from her sheet music, hitting that guitar of hers like a Muppet rockstar, she saw faces, many faces of smiling. People stood on the outer edges of the fenced in lot, she waved for them to come in, little children were dancing, and the hippie folks were sipping wine and nibbling cheese, while moms at the blanket next to them handed out tamales and kids with caribbean curls watered plants around the garden, tasting their first Pop Rocks candy- the faces were from everywhere...a muslim girl in her scarf smiled and gave a thumbs up...and for a moment in time Bleu saw her perfect world and it was here, on Howard Street.

She realized as she packed up her music equipment and laid a blanket down under the now milky moonlight, that a dandelion could be both a flower and a weed and both were part of its ultimate survival no matter where it's seeds landed.

What is success...what is a flower...how do we define our lives?