

Words, words, prosecco

by Amanda Kohr

Maybe it's because I like to write, or maybe it's because I cannot dance. Whatever the reason, I think that words are one of the **best things in the entire world**. I love letters, typed or in cursive. I love ink, either on skin or parchment or the white tableau of the computer. I love the words canoe, quartet, and *prosecco*.

Say it. Right now. It's fun, right? Prosecco reminds me of orange marmalade, Italian tablecloths, and the smell of waffles crisping before a Sunday Brunch. For those of you who have not encountered its bliss, prosecco is as lovely a drink as it is a locution. This sparkling white wine is the less fussy sister to champagne, and it's bubbles never fail to disappoint. (*Right now I'm imagining the sisters Prosecco and Champagne in their little wine household. Their mother is a Chardonnay and their father is a Port. I don't know how wine reproduction works.*) Prosecco is carefree and a little magical. In the play, *Reckless*, by Craig Lucas, the protagonist, Rachel, describes her experience with sparkling wine, and how she would turn her head upside down to watch the bubbles fall like snow. I always loved this image. Prosecco is falling snow. Clean, pure, and divine.

A few months ago my friend Hannah and I enjoyed a prosecco-esque beverage outside The Standard Hotel in Chelsea. We were in New York City on one of our days off from the Renaissance Faire, and had a few hours to kill before meeting up with our friends Kate and Brett before heading back to Pennsylvania. Being in our early twenties and without any immediate obligation, we decided to drink the afternoon away.

We sat outside, among the young professionals and silver-haired men dining alone, craftily tearing their foccaccia and using their napkins to dab at their faintly wrinkled chins. Hannah and I stood out, wearing out brightly colored sunglasses and talking too loud. I like Hannah, because when I half-jokingly suggested we order an entire pitcher of a drink, she shrugged her shoulder and with casual smile said, "Why not?" It wasn't like we had already each had a beer and taken a pickle-back shot. (We had.)

Regretfully, I forget the name of our drink. I do, however, remember it coming in a glass pitcher with a wooden spoon placed in the center like a lone oar. Inside was the dangerous concoction of prosecco, vodka, muddled berries and mint. The bubbles and our Renn-faire personalities made us giddy and attempt exuberant conversation with our waiter, Serge. He disinterested in being anything more than our server, and even that role seemed to cause him mild annoyance. No matter. We had a blast.

About two weeks later, I tried to replicate the drink. It was a Wednesday night in September, and hot for the mountains of Pennsylvania. To understand this next part you must understand the Renn Faire set-up; behind the actual Faire, there was a place affectionately known as "The Commons" which consisted of the actors housing and living arrangements. Behind that, there was a small settlement of independent acts,

consisting of musicians, gypsies, jugglers, stilt-walkers and knights. It was a breeding ground for creativity. One of the artists, a gypsy named Aly, arranged a 50s theme party and potluck, so that the actors and the independent acts could socialize and get to know one another.

Everyone was excited for this event. I, on the other hand, was in a state of stress. You see, a few days prior, I had taken another trip to New York City, and **accidentally left my cell phone in a rest stop about two hours north of the faire.** Dumb, dumb, dumb! I found the only spare time I had to make the four hour round retrieval trip, which was the same night as the 50s potluck. Originally, I had been planning on using this time to make something delicious and theme appropriate, but by the time I arrived back at The Commons, people were already in their polka-dot dresses and sporting bright red lipstick. I immediately thought of what I could bring that would require little to no cooking time and then it came to me. Booze.

I had vodka. I had berries; I used them in my oatmeal for breakfast. For some odd reason I also had mint and my mother had recently given me a bottle of prosecco. This was too easy.

So, in a quick flurry of creation, I made the drink. Due to the fact that we could not remember the name, Hannah and I called it “Coopy’s Cup.” The name Coopy came from earlier in Hannah and I’s friendship; she was playing a game of Pokemon and needed a name for her Pidgey, so I suggested Coopy. The name stuck, and then we used it to honor an alcoholic treat. The berries weren’t as muddled as they had been at The Standard, but it would do.

By this point, the sun had melted into the unseen depths of sky and we all playfully intermingled, snacking on deviled eggs and apple pie, and then washing them down with cold beer or a glass of the Coopy’s Cup. I wore my favorite yellow dandelion dress, which carried a small orange stain from when I was painting a Styrofoam version of the Sun. The prosecco electrified my bloodstream. With the hanging tapestries and tea lights, I felt as if I were in modern version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, minus the love-struck donkey man.

I think of this night often. The images, the tastes, and the touches all resonate and remain etched in my mind; but the only way I can communicate the memory is using my words. I cannot explain the feeling of the humidity, but I can tell you my skin stuck to the cotton of my dress. I cannot describe the giddiness that echoed down my wrists and into my fingernails, but I can say *prosecco*. I cannot even accurately translate the buttery, minty taste of the Coopy’s Cup. I can, however, give you the recipe.

Coopy’s Cup (serves 2-6, depending on your thirst.)

1 bottle of prosecco

1 cup of vodka (I like Absolut. A flavored vodka also does quite nicely, but can make it a tad too sweet for the sensitive taste-budded.)

½ cup strawberries
½ cup blueberries
A handful of fresh mint

Tear and muddled the mint at the bottom of a large pitcher. Add the berries and muddle a bit more, but not to the point where all the berries are crushed. Pour in the vodka and prosecco. Stir gently. I like to use a wooden spoon, but this is more for feeling than flavor.

Enjoy on a hot night, or a cold night when you turn up the heat and pretend its summer.