

The Cloud Drifter

Kicking and screaming they come out, the smallest and biggest, with wondering eyes and scared hearts.

I was born in a time when the pink and deep golden clouds were still hovering across the skies. My days were spent at the edges of the heavens, gazing and playing with vapors, thinking that was my world, the stuff that makes the rain fall down. I loved to play with the drops, through them was the only way I could see my reflection, to remember what I look like.

One night a storm came to tremor my place among the clouds, mighty black clouds grabbed me and plunged me down with the heavy rain, I came crashing down like a rock.

There was now water everywhere and my body was made of things that merged with liquid, I became loose and stretched, my vast wings were useless and weighed me down, it was strange to need air so suddenly and in panic I gasped and gasped, until I knew how to keep my head above the surface. I was the surface, I became fish-like, and swam.

I had never known of anything like the ocean, then suddenly I was part of it, I couldn't control the intake how it spread around me like a blanket of eternal, crushing blue and black space. There was nobody, but me and the clouds above me roared like a pack of lions, far away, but as close as my own skin.

That was my birth into the world of water and storm. I was a dream made flesh, but still couldn't decide what to do in this new form.

I floated for days on an end, the fish became my brothers and sisters I never knew existed. They didn't know about the storm above, they never had to gasp for air or know what is like to play with water drops. Water was around their whole being, but they didn't know what was it like to be wet. It was strange to explain it to them, and they always left staring like children who listen without understanding, just asking more and nodding their heads.

The current took me to shore, where I finally learned to use my feet. Standing on the soft sand and looking at my wet wings I felt out of place, still screaming inside like a newborn meeting another world full of strangeness and endless stretching space.

As I closed my eyes I remembered the lightness of my days in the clouds, the simplicity of it. And i knew how I could never go back. My wings refused to fly, they wanted to serve lighter beings than me.

The sand began to burn my toes, as they got used to walking forward. The sand got hotter and hotter as I continued reaching the end of the shoreline. Was the whole world this empty? Why am I suffering so much just by existing? Wasn't I just as much part of the world when my home was in the clouds, in the ocean, and now on this shore? However as I walked further the more it hurt.

I had to rest for a moment and thought about my wings, how they slowed me down immensely. Their tips were already dirty and worn, so many large feathers had fallen off with the fall and disappeared into the ocean. I had to cut my wings off, if I ever wished to walk faster and stand straight, feeling unburdened.



I found a sharp rock and looked at it for a while and tears began to run down my face. Drops of water. The tears I played with up in the clouds. Now the drops were my own and also the ocean's salt tasted in them like no other taste I had known before. I knew what had to be done and I was afraid, no, I was terrified to the core what I was about to do.

I started to cut, at first I couldn't do much damage, only a few bruises. Then the bone cracked, then another bone and blood squirted on my chest and shoulders. My hands were wet with my own blood. I didn't know if I cried, because of the actual pain or the upcoming understanding how I will never heal from this memory. But I continued, I cracked and tore and crushed the bone until the wing snapped off and the only thing that was left was a throbbing stump of bloody meat attached to my shoulder blade. I fell asleep after this, let myself fall into a dark dream that allowed a small relief to the realization that I had to do it one more time.

The golden rays of the morning sun touched my face, as I slowly woke up, lying in the sand in a pool of my own blood. Most of it had dried up and disappeared into the sand. I realized I was part of the sand now as well. Does the sand speak about this to anyone, I wonder? Does it tell about my pain and crime to those who might sit and watch the ocean on this very spot? The sand never answered back, because it had no life, no life could survive on a ground it could not trust. My blood disappeared

and was never to be seen again. And so did my wings, all my tears and memories of the flights in the pink clouded skies. The colours were still there somewhere, of course, and so were the clouds, but only I had become flesh and they would never do the same. A dream made of vapor, clouds, ocean and sand is a sore sight to see, since there had never been a dreamer before, like me.

I explained my torment to myself again and again, just to convince myself that my wings were indeed useless and did not serve any purpose, but to remind me of the time I had not known the force of the wind. My wings failed me from the start, so I tore them apart, it was the right thing to do, so I would be free to move on earth and not pretend I was a bird in a body too heavy to carry itself.

I finally got further from the ocean and came across a highway that was busy with speeding cars. I kept on walking despite people shouting something at me, some laughing, shocked to see a living bloody dream, but how were they supposed to know? Just like the sand, they kept on going on their way, sinking themselves inside a dead surface without a memory or relation to the world around them.

Again I fell asleep under a quiet spot where two bridges crossed each other. The sounds of the cars above lulled me to a mix of delirium and agony, that also silenced the loud aching of my wounds.

"A-a-re you hurt? What's happened to your back?"

I opened my eyes like a blind who wants to see, but couldn't see what's real, only the illusion of sight.

"Why are your wings torn like that? Looks really painful.. and you're very beautiful. Don't you want to be an angel anymore?"

My tongue was swollen from drought, and I couldn't understand those questions. What on earth is an 'angel'?

"Do your wings ever grow back again, how big were they?"

A little child, sitting in front of me, asked many things very fast with a concerned voice, demanding me to speak, despite he clearly didn't see my confusion that I did not know what an angel even was.

"I.. I tore them off.. left them. So that I could better walk on Earth, as a *being of flesh*. Like you walk. They were too heavy for me."

Then the child took his shirt off and showed me his back. There was a tattoo of two wings on his skin.

"I only have images of wings, but I've always wanted to fly. I never knew they could be real and that Angels can hurt themselves just because they're Angels. I would have really given anything to see your wings. At least tell me about them, if you can't grow them back, please?"

The child brought me water, I drank like it was a fountain of vitality itself that contained my whole purpose of being. And I told him what I had used my wings for. And only then I realized how such beautiful wings they had been. And they had been all mine.

The End.

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(Illustration: 'Love is Agony', 2011.)