

Flames

A bird flies to settle down upon my finger and looks at me with tired, adoring eyes. It brushes its beak through its graying feathers, soft and smooth, like velvet. A window is open, the light sifting through in long, gray strands, cold, but awake. The bird doesn't fly away, despite being a prisoner in my home. Its freedom is in reach, yet it sits quietly, looking up at my face, with a strange look of content. Its heart is beating in like with mine, our chests rising heavily in sync. We are two parts of one mind, connected by a tattered red string of fate.

In the afternoon I go out, wrapped up in a wool shawl, my mind freezing in the autumn wind. The trees wave at me, their leaves almost gone, and the sun cracks one eye open to look down at me through the clouds. My footsteps echo on the stone sidewalk, the sound reverberating through the narrow passageways of the Old City. I am content, alone, in the broken silence.

I turn a corner and walk under a small stone archway. I look down and my vision bursts at the sudden splash of colour on the pale, empty street. A bundle of feathers, tiny flares of red, yellow and blue, the remnants of a white speckled egg cradling the flames. I reach out towards it, my hands brushing the soft blaze, the colour singeing my fingers and leaking into my finger tips. My palms are white cold as I take the flame into my arms, my coat burning away when I accidentally splash the blazing colours onto my sleeve.

I walk home, my grey coat almost gone, the sidewalk disintegrating behind me. I open the door and place the bundle upon the starch white sheets. Its feathers unfurl and, in a single, magnificent burst of inferno, my bird simmers into being. Sparks fly off of its tail-feathers as it leaps into the air, leaving a trail of colour in its wake. It settles next to my old bird and nuzzles its head gently, with the love and kindness of a brother. My past bird takes one last look at me before spreading its wings and flying joyously out the window, taking my past self with it.

My bird settles upon my finger and looks at me with large, curious eyes. It brushes its beak through its technicolor feathers, smooth and fluid, like silk. The window is still open, the light sifting through in short strips, red, like the coming sunset. My bird doesn't fly away, despite being a prisoner in my home. Its freedom is in reach, yet it sits quietly, looking up at my face, with a strange look of content. Its heart is beating in like with mine, our chests rising in sync. We are two parts of one mind, connected by a red string of fate.

My bird is my rebirth, a new crimson string tied in place of the one that wore away, and I, too, am its rebirth, someone worth losing its freedom to. We have been born anew, together, every day, for ten long years, and will be born again tomorrow, with the new day.