

Red Box Place and its Swirly Insides

I look up from under my tickly feathers.

I try to see the end of the large building, but I cannot. It goes on and on like an infinity pool; the choppy edges of the building seem to go on forever, and then they just cease unexpectedly. The fake texture of the white bricks on the square building, the monotonous style, makes me dizzy. The *swoosh* of the cars passing by the red and white ice cream shop scare me to a crisp. The freaky lip-shaped mystery item with the tacky DQ logo on top of the building makes me laugh at these humans. I've noticed that this overtly shabby design seems to be the trademark of this company, no matter where it is in the nation. Many humans see this place as a destination to share their varying lives with other boring humans. The ground rumbles under me like an earthquake, but I know the feeling all too well; a human is coming my way. I stare at the big footed, giant sack of meat coming my way and can't help myself as I say, "Why don't *you* move for once?"

They can't hear me though. Of course they can't hear me, they're deaf! I curse the day humans ruled over the earth, but I reluctantly get out of the way. We could have gotten along, but they are not civilized! They just like to run us over. I flutter my wings out, slice the winds with my power, and take to the sky.

I close the squeaky car door of my old ford and usher the kids out like cattle.

Although, that would be semi-cannibalistic since they are coming here to eat some mouthwatering ice cream. I can hear my father's raspy voice in my head. He once told me about how excited he was when he went to Dairy Queen as a kid. A mob of people crowd the entrance to the small castle, but we do not care enough to leave. The parking lot is as full as always with hungry people who have all been tricked by their beguiling children and their own sweet teeth. The barbarically simple look of the building cannot do enough to repel people from the delicious ice cream that is contained inside.

It amazes me that something as simple as frozen milk and cream attracts so many people, but most of them, like me, just come here to spend time with their families. As I look down at the boiling black pavement, I notice a majestic little thing, a tiny bird just taking flight. As I step

inside the entrapping ice cream shop, a wave of cold air ripples across my face. We receive the delicate cones later on from the young ladies behind the characterless counters and move our bumpy tongues over the smooth surface of the ice cream. We try to get our ice cream as early as we can because I heard the ice cream machine has an attitude and it sometimes breaks down later in the day. I feel bad for the teen worker at those times. A moment of forgetfulness results in ice cream from my cone dripping on the ground. I glower at the sun because it just will not let me enjoy my treat without its jealously taking some of it and dropping it with a sassy *plop* on the festering and hot earth. I look to my innocent son as he plays with the birds and hope my money is not spent uselessly as he thrashes his ice cream cone around violently.

Ice cream. Yum. Wow, a birdy. Look at Daddy, I wanna tell him it's a birdy.

“Daddy! Daddy! It's a birdy.” Daddy doesn't answer. Daddy's eating ice cream like me.

Ice cream at Red Box Place. I have heavy cone in my hand, but worth it to have heavy cone bringing my hand down. I love coming to Dara Quan or the Red Box Place. Daddy calls it Dara Quan, but I like Red Box Place better. I get ice cream all the time here. Daddy likes Dara Quan too. But Daddy likes the white ones and I like the brown ones, it tastes like a better thing. My brother and my sister like the pink ones. The ground is full of birdys again! I like to run with them, but they run away. Why do they run away? I just want to be friends. I want me and Daddy and Brother and Sister to be friends with the birdys too. I want all of us to be friendies. I like to make friendies at Red Box Place. Red Box Place is where friends live and only come out when I come to get ice cream. Why can't all people be my friendies? My ice cream is good. I wonder if Yellow up above likes it too. I should ask Yellow. But Yellow might try to take all of it. My daddy says to me to share, but Yellow gets jealous and takes it all away. But I want to try to share.

“Yellow! You want ice cream? Then take!” I hold up ice cream and a tiny part falls to the ground. I like to share with Yellow. I like to share ice cream with Yellow at Red Box Place and with Daddy and Brother and Sister too.

It's a long way down to the small known as Earth.

Earth is one of the few sites that is worthy of attracting me and my glorious rays of sunshine. The crackles of my rays are audible only to my ears as I swiftly glide them over the surface of a small, square ice cream shop.

I lay my eyes on a cone of shiny ice cream and lick my rays over the plane of the fluffy substance, causing a drip to form like a snowball, gaining momentum as it slides toward its doom. It cascades down the mountain of white ice cream and, thanks to me, hits the blistering pavement. One lament is that I am unable to reach the inside of this prison-like caged box. Another is that I cannot bask in the humans' company and talk as they do to each other. I always wonder if what they say is of any importance, or do they just drone on and babble to each other about unintelligent subjects. The dull white bricks of this frustrating space hide the mysterious and luscious ice cream that I crave to melt down with my waves of heat. I reach my rays over to the horrid looking tiles, but the insides of the box are lost to me. All that I may lay upon are human heads, puffy ice cream and square black roofs of delicatessen shops.

The inhumane noise of human children reaches my metallic ears.

They call me a machine that only squirts out, quite loudly at times, ice cream, but I have more personality than those squirmy, greedy-for-my-insides children! They hunger for what I have inside me, but I must not give in to the mad mob. The sweaty teenage workers labor over my insides and squander about to provide for the tall humans who, in turn, offer paper and metal that they throw on the dirty-and-cluttered-counters. Don't get me wrong, I do love what I do. I have helped so many people and communities achieve that little sense of belonging with friends by giving them a little bite of happiness. I look from lonely corner to lonely corner of the box that is my living area.

The dirt in those corners scream out my name in a helpless plea, "Help us, Isè Crème Masheene!"

But they aren't heard. We got in a fight last week and they've been avoiding me. They might revolt and attack me. It must be why they have been gathering in the corners, right?

Or they may just be helpless against our common enemy. They cannot fight like I can. How can I fight, you may ask, in a small room of future diabetics? I can make myself sick and deprive them of what they ask for, my swirly insides made up of dreamy-gallons-of-ice-cream.

Shreek! Shhhherk! Silence. Everyone desperately works to fix me but, alas, I am broken. The uniform ladies turn with sorry faces to the people with the sad, stinky paper and metal in hand. The humans turn to each other and realize that they must come up with some other form of communal gathering. They walk out of the small box that is my living room and I am left alone with my exhausted colleagues, dusty corners and swirly insides.