

Sunflowers

Many hours had passed since I'd laid there, gazing up at the clouds, which looked as if they'd been carefully painted by an artist's soft strokes. I watched as they crawled slowly across the beryl sky, my fingers digging into the dirt beneath me. The grass seemed to pull me closer, embracing my body like a dearly loved one. The wind amongst the sunflower fields called to me and repeatedly whispered in my ear. "Chase me." It hissed. It stroked my neck slowly and tugged at my hair lightly. As a calming feeling settled into me, I knew that I just couldn't leave the Earth's embrace.

"Chase me, chase me."

Furiously, the wind started to blow harder and harder but I remained linked to the cold ground. I could feel the breeze getting lonely as it slithered slowly, but roughly across my skin. Shivering at how brisk it had gotten, I glanced up to see no more blue and the clouds disappeared like cotton candy on a summer day. The sky had become a dark and somber grey. "I'm sorry." I whispered, and then listened as silent sighs reverberated through the trees and all around me. A teardrop, just one, fell from above and pierced my skin. Another, then more and more quickly showered upon my whole body. A loud, thundering roar echoed over me as I sat up quickly and the wind gushed past me like a stampede of horses. I was pushed forward; I took one last look down then started to run away. Dandelions that had been under me were now nothing but crushed hopes and dreams I had escaped from.

As I ran through the field of sunflowers, yellow, brown and green a-blur, the sorrowful wind chased me, gushing past my arms and legs almost as if trying to trip me. It felt as if I'd been running for lifetimes. I felt the storm slow down as I glared up to find the sun to be seemingly following me as it peeked through the grey clouds, which gradually grew whiter. I kept running until the sky had lit up slowly. All was suddenly bright; birds chirped their eerie melodies and a warm blanket had settled on the land.

I stopped and sat down on a log, strangely unwearied. I glanced around to see a trillion trees of all sizes and shapes next to one another. As I sat for a while and stared off into the distance, I noticed the wind had become softer and more playful. It had arrived and pushed a fruit off the nearest tree for me. I walked toward the light thump, smiling, and picked it up to examine closer. It was a deep electric blue and seemed to have had a glimmer

to it, as if the stars were embedded into its flesh. I wondered whether the wind was giving me fruit for energy or if I was going to die of poisoning within seconds. I took a bite, startled at the sensation on my tongue, an unexplainable taste. Not sweet, not bitter. Nor was it sour or salty. The closest explanation was that it was like the taste of colors and constellations put together in one little orb. I felt this sudden drop in the pit of my stomach and a sudden rush of loneliness filled my veins. I couldn't stop the tears as I slowly swallowed the venom of sadness from this fruit. I felt as if I were falling down, alone and tired. I felt the hunger and poverty of the world rest on my shoulders. As I tried to shudder it off, the corruption of mankind gave me a sickening fever. The wind wiped a tear from my cheek, then led me to an aisle of fruit-filled trees.

Not far from me, I heard another light thump on the forest ground. Another fruit had been dropped. I walked over slowly, trying to find my way through the blurriness of my watery eyes. As I picked it up, a tear dropped onto the fruit, under which it blazed a beautiful emerald green, and then slowly dimmed. This clear fruit looked like a perfectly-circular frozen ice cube but was at room temperature. I placed it between my index finger and thumb, observing the green glow under my fingerprints and held it up in front of my eyes. The trees could be seen through this soft, round fruit though they were upside down from my perspective. I took a bite, as it dissolved extremely fast, starting as a solid then quickly dissolved as a cold liquid, tasting like a sweet, sweet cocktail. I started to giggle. Soon, I was smiling uncontrollably. A warm sensation scrambled through my veins and a tingle ran through my fingers. This blissful state had me jumping in total stillness; it got my heart quivering and dropping then filled my stomach with butterflies. No, fireworks! I just couldn't contain this joy. My screams of laughter echoed through the empty forest. Everything around me was brighter, my spirits were lifted and the birds bawled a happy tune. I had flashbacks of my childhood. Swinging on swings, making sandcastles in the sandbox and I felt the complete bliss of innocence without a worry in the world.

I and spun around trees, very curious of what effects the other fruits would have. I looked down at my feet and saw that the clear fruit in my left hand was now full again, as if I'd never taken a bite. I sighed, with a smile still on my face, then slowly walked through the forest peering at all the other fruit above, not being able to pry my eyes off them. One was a light grey but at another angle, colors poured out of it. A crystal-like red fruit caught my eye and next to it were some yellow, oddly-shaped fruit with an amazing smell. My wondering

thoughts lingered but the wind brushed me out of the forest as if it was trying to keep me away.

Still looking back at the trees, the wind led me where I could hear what sounded like the crashing of waves on a rocky shore, seagulls screeching away and I could smell the saltwater. Ecstatically, I ran forward, impatient to feel the sand on my feet and the sea breeze against me. I could already taste the salt and see the beams shining from Helios; the warmth blanketed me. I parted the long strands of leaves hanging down that canopied the cold forest, which I didn't notice had become darker. I looked out and saw a glittering horizon with a small, dimming light peeking goodbye before hiding away. Radiant splashes of yellow, orange, pink and red stroked across the sky. I watched the gleaming of the sun slowly disappear and everything above go black. The starriest of nights had arrived like a school of silver fish deep in the sea, twinkling as their scales reflected the light. Under a tall palm tree, I laid and looked up at this giant astrological map of places never explored, amazed. I smiled and thought of all that had happened then thanked the wind for taking me away on an adventure. I thanked the world for being such a beautiful place and I thanked Mother Nature for feeding us of our needs.

My eyes slowly closed as I drifted off into darkness. The crashing of the waves onto rocks replayed in my dreams and I listened to the siren's strange songs as they sat on the rocks, putting starfish in their hair. I was imagining the sound of rain, thunder whispering as I was lying in space, stardust giving my skin a cold, icy pinch. I can't help but realize how neglected the world around us is. Nature is truly a hero for it feeds us, protects us and replenishes us with oxygen. In return, we give it breath and life, but we don't acknowledge its beauty. My mind started to wander along with the sound of leaves dancing in the trees as I thought of a baby in the mother's womb; like the warm fort of cushions I built as a child, pretending there were monsters under the bed and defeating them in war then trotting off to glory with my fellow soldiers. A feast was held with a bonfire and there was music and dancing. All was well and we were happy... That's all that matters, right?

Slowly, I woke up to the warm embrace of the grass beneath me, the clouds slowly crawling across the sky above me. Strange eerie music echoed through the forest as I felt the wind brush slowly against my cheek. Puzzled by this strange event, I sat up only to find a transparent sphere in my left hand. Looking through it, I saw the sunflowers... though they

were upside down. I smirk and take a bite. Smiling to myself, I looked off at the sunflower field and listened to the wind as it whispered in my ear.

“Chase me.”
