

Waiting by the Water — Freya Wheable

I walk through a grand hall, it is one of the most breathtaking places I have ever seen. The sides are made of towering marble pillars, some of the greatest Roman architecture. The pillars are adorned with carvings that seem to shift. Some designs show love and hope; other days they display true horrors. Above me the ceiling sits; it's an enchanting work of art with its divine Renaissance craft. The rosy cherubs fly, shooting their love-struck arrows at intricate depictions of young couples.

As the design blooms, I keep moving through the hall until I reach a garden made up of the most bewitching colours. Woodlands of willow trees sway softly. They are adorned with viridescent leaves and the grass is vibrant with shades of emerald. They contrast resplendently with the amethyst lavender along with the other exquisite flowers which shine like topaz and rubies.

Right in the centre sits a reflecting pool carved out of a magnificent pearlescent stone with elegant vines and flowers embellishing it. I perch on the edge and gaze into the azure water. I see my friends and family. I see them moving on; I see them smile and laugh; they are doing all the stuff we used to do together which I fondly reminisce about. I also see all the new adventures that I can't be part of. I want nothing more than to reach out and hug them one last time but that is something I can only dream of for a long time. I know they will come and join me again but I want the wait to be long so until that day I will rest in peace.

Ben Beecher

The Haunting In The Sea

His heart throbbed in his chest as he stared at the crystal water, shimmering like a priceless chandelier in the reflection of the bolts of lightning that streaked across the vicious sky. They lashed at the waves that loomed over James's raft and crashed down, piercing the surface of the water in a tidal wave of oscillations and frothing, merciless ferocity. The decaying, wooden raft's side was attacked and punctured by the destructive liquid, sending James spiralling across the planks. His flesh met shattered oak and grazed his skin, drawing a dark line of blood down his arm and burning his body. His deep green eyes flitted all around, but his vision was temporarily impaired by the constant barrage of hail and spray from the sea. He traced the cut with a trembling finger and blew it gently to cease the agonising pain that terrorised his insides and arm, but the rain only fell harder and the raft slipped into the silence of the ocean again, dipping under the towering waves. James clawed along the splintering wood, the water plummeting down on him. His soaked, brown hair hung limply over his eyes, but he didn't have the time or energy to move it away. He reached the spindly mast that protruded limply from the centre of the raft. Dark clouds rolled ahead of him, a desolate plain of misery and endless suffering that he edged closer towards, and he choked on his own bloody mucous and terror. He fumbled around him until he grasped a strong material, thick and dangly over the edge and disappearing into the murky water below, engulfed by waves and foaming ocean. He yanked the rope upwards violently, his teeth gritted in effort as he began to gradually overpower the tugging that he felt on the other end. If he could keep himself in place, the pushing and punching of the water would not move him. With a final sense of helpless desperation, he tied the rope firmly around his ankle, sending a drop of blood onto the raft. He stared into the sea, his eyes poisoned by fear, as another wave came down, smashing against the raft with malevolence of a boxer against their rival opponent. James's scream washed away with him and he was sent from the raft, over the other side with a frantic whimper. He fell downwards, his blood pulsing through his body as his lungs filled with the bitter liquid. He held his mouth shut tightly and he slipped further away, the surface disappearing along with the raft. Then there was a tug at his ankle that reminded him of the rope stopping him from drowning. A crack in his lips sent the water funnelling down his throat, scratching and scraping at his organs, but the rope held fast. Slowly, his eyelids drooped, when a light appeared within the bleak water; it was a pulsating, white light that shrank in on itself into the form of a man, thin and slender with bones that stuck out of his body, his flesh, as white as a sheet, peeling off his skull. The man walked underneath the surface with the elegance of a ballet dancer and approached James with dignity and respect. Gradually, the rope untied itself, although he didn't fall down. He remained frozen in the water, suspended in motion as he took the man's hand, which was cool to the touch, almost empty of blood or life. James wasn't drowning anymore. He was floating.

Charlie Ellis -

The Crimson Scarf

Snow drifted down across the gentle forest as the robins sang in between the branches of the towering pine trees creating a calming melody. As Ralph strolled through the forest back to his parents' warm log cabin in the woods, he felt the cold sinking into his skin, he reached into his brown jacket pocket and pulled out his woolly crimson scarf. Just then the leaves of a small bush rustled, and a milky white fox pounced at him, it seized Ralph's scarf and swiftly darted into the vast forest as quickly as it appeared.

Ralph bit his lip, concerned, that was his mother's scarf, he had to get it back. Squinting at where the fox ran off, he noticed some light tracks creating a minor crease in the snow. Determined to retrieve the scarf, Ralph briskly walked in the direction of the tracks through the dense frost tipped undergrowth hoping the snowy fox would show itself again. He came to an ancient pine tree with gigantic branches going every direction, a robin poked its head out of a cosy hole in the tree and spotted Ralph, it fluttered down to his arm and perched on him. It beat its delicate wings hard almost as if it was trying to pull Ralph with it. Ralph realised the miniature bird was trying to tell him something, maybe the fox could have gone that direction, thought Ralph.

Though he knew it was ridiculous to put his faith in a small olive brown bird most likely wanting to pilfer his pocket of raisins he stored for when he was peckish for a light snack, he trudged on through the powdery snow towards where the robin had suggested.

Without further interruption Ralph carried on through the forest in search of the fox for what seemed like an eternity, until he heard a faint sound coming from behind a patch of innocent ferns. As he peered over, his heart warmed as if he was sitting in his parents cabin. In front of him lay the same milk white fox that stole his scarf and forced him to go on this journey, and beside it lay 3 miniature fox cubs as pure as snow, bundled up in the scarf silently sleeping, comfortable in the homely folds of the scarf.

That's why the fox stole his scarf, Ralph realised as he finally made sense of the situation like the final piece of jigsaw sliding into place. Ralph finally understood, he knew this winter was hard for the animals home to this forest, his family often rescued the freezing birds that lay in the trees, nurturing them back up to health before releasing them. He knew those fox cubs needed all the help they could get as they slept soundly like miniscule, cradled children under the scarf. He decided they needed it more than he did. Taking one last look at the tranquil cubs he walked off silently towards his home happy he had done the right thing.

The End

