

‘The Ballad Of A Shooting Star’

Can you see me?

I am at the edge of the sky, streaking along in a wide slash against the dark velvet background. I am a silver brushstroke on the night sky, soaring around the Earth and being observed by millions. I am a glowing beam of hope for those who have much to hope for; I am a shred of optimism with wishes piled high upon me. I scatter sparkling magic into the night, raining down upon those snuggled tight in their beds. I am a shooting star.

I have been watching ever since the very beginning. I have seen your dinosaurs, your arrival, your evolution. I served as a witness as technology advanced and as great metal and glass mammoths rose from the ground and scraped the clouds above. I watched them be torn down, and rebuilt, and torn down. I have seen you go about your daily routine, the monotony of your

pedestrian lives. The rushed breakfasts, the awkward family dinners, the babies, the marriages, the lost loves, the drama, the tears and the laughter... I've seen it all. I have watched countless stories unfold, stretching over centuries and influencing the many lives that entwine into your great tangle of strings, the strings that are everything you are and everything you will become. I have watched you gaze up here, into the heavens, pondering what it is to live your lives as you gallivant about travelling, laughing and generally trudging through your days sharing toothpaste, diseases and trying to figure out the common thread that binds you all together.

It is beautiful, the sheer messiness of it all. You wish for perfection; you are given the opposite. You are given a world with pain and suffering and choose to focus on that instead of the miracles that occur right in front of your eyes that search so hard for them. You are given music, and dance, and laughter and poetry. You are given the autumn, the sun, the spring rain and the

flowers raising their delicate heads up from the glittering snow.

You look for the simple moments, but before you find them they are gone. They are gone as swiftly as the planet turns.

Every day I watch this. It saddens me, I must admit, that you do not see the purity and bliss of your lives. But, there is a strange exhilaration to this life. I can hear the cello strings, plucked in an alleyway in downtown Paris mingled with the singing of a young German girl far away as I dart across the sky. I can hear and see everything. I hear the crescendos of your voices, and I see your stunning paintings and your curiosities and your need to express yourselves. I see it all, and though it is simply a blur most of the time, there is an odd magnificence to the blur that I cannot explain. Perhaps it is because I lack this, I lack the freedom to see the world and to sing and to dance and fall in love. I lack the simple pleasure of seeing the mosaic of people whirl around you as you dance, the calm of an autumn's walk, the heart-pumping exhilaration you feel as you dangle your feet off of the edge of a

cliff. Even still, I see it. I see the pleasure on your faces after these things, and I see how wonderful it is for you. I see the big picture, and that is why I live a good life up here, alone in the sky.

I have spent much time, thinking of this. Much pondering, searching, observing. I am left with many hours to think, and none to talk to here, dancing through the constellations and peering down at you. It is not a lonely existence, though. I rather enjoy seeing this story extend, over generations. I like seeing the way it changes and shifts and branches off in wild new ways as life throws you a curveball. I like seeing your developments, your flaws, your setbacks, the way you overcome your challenges. It all seems so very raw, so very true, and so very *real* up here.

Perhaps I should just sit back. Perhaps, like the others, I should leave behind my childish observances about you and simply occupy myself with what is around me, instead of what is around those who are far, far below me. Perhaps someday I will do this, but for now, I cannot. I cannot for the same reason you

cannot stop stargazing; stop being curious, stop exploring. I am impossibly curious. I observe and I think and I observe some more. There is so much for me to see, so much to experience, so much to try. The galaxy is just brimming with things to discover, and I have only seen barely a hundredth of what there is to see, and so have you.

Some years ago, I wept for you and the way you do not appreciate what you have. But after time, I have wizened. I know now, after many millennia of observing, that you know how beautiful your lives are. It takes much time, much effort, and much work, but you know. By the time you depart your planet in the journey to join us, up here in the heavens, you understand. You always end up more than appreciative of what you have been dealt – you are overjoyed. You have seen all that you can, and your soul is finally at a rest that cannot be achieved with money or owning much. You are at peace.

Make a wish, little one. It just might come true.