

Be Like An Albatross

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PLAYLIST

LET HER GO-PASSENGER ♡

FIX YOU-COLDPLAY ♡

THIS IS ME TRYING-TAYLOR SWIFT ♡

CHERRY WINE-HOZIER ♡

YOUTH-DAUGHTER ♡

I LIKE ME BETTER-LAUV ♡

ILAHI-ARIJIT SINGH ♡

AAO CHALEIN-TABA CHAKE ♡

IKTARA-KAVITA SETH ♡

SOORAJ KI BAAHON MEIN-CLINTON CEREJO ♡

PATAKHA GUDDI-NOORAN SISTERS ♡

KUN FAYA KUN-A.R. REHMAN ♡

Dedication

To the version of me who almost gave up-
"And to everyone who is hopeful and hopeless."

Flight plan

- *QUOTE*
- *CHAPTER 1- Where the sky begins*
- *Part 1- Dream's dawn*
- *Part 2- Taking flight*
- *CHAPTER 2- Between storms and horizons*
- *Part 1- Mid-Air Challenges*
- *Part 2- Reaching Horizons*
- *THE ARCHIVE*
- *A LETTER FOR YOU*

"Perhaps the saddest thing
about forgetting yourself is that you remember
everyone else."

Chapter- 1
Where the Sky Begins

They told me to be practical.

To stay close to the ground.

Dreaming in sizes that would not scare the world.

No one warned me that the sky would keep calling anyway.

I grew up learning how to fold my wings quietly, politely-so they wouldn't knock over expectations. I learned how to smile when people said "that's unrealistic" and how to nod when they said, "someday, maybe." I learned how to wait. For permission. For approval. For the right time.

But the ocean never waits.

And neither does the wind.

Somewhere between becoming responsible and becoming invisible, I forgot that I was once a child who

believed the horizon was a promise, not a boundary. I forgot that I used to look up and feel my chest ache not from fear, but from wanting. Wanting more. Wanting far. Wanting elsewhere.

This book is not about running away.

It is about remembering.

The albatross does not flap endlessly to prove it can fly. It trusts the wind.

It stretches its wings and lets the sky do half the work. It travels distances that seem impossible, not because it is reckless, but because it is free.

I have spent years mistaking fear for wisdom and caution for maturity. I thought staying grounded made me strong. I thought clipping on my own dreams made me feel safe. But safety has a way of shrinking you until one day; you wake up and realize you have survived everything-except yourself.

If you are reading this, maybe you know that feeling too.

The quiet exhaustion of being everything everyone needs, except who you want to be.

The ache of having dreams that feel too loud for the rooms you're in.

The guilt of wanting more when you've been told you should be grateful already.

This book is for the ones who were taught to be sensible before they were taught to be brave.

For the ones who carry entire worlds inside them but learned to speak in whispers.

For the ones who feel like they are late to their own lives.

I don't have a map for you.

Only directions.

Towards the wind that scares you.

Towards the dream, you keep postponing.

Towards the version of you that feels wild, unfinished, and deeply alive.

You don't need to know how the journey ends.

The albatross doesn't.

It only knows when it's time to open its wings.

So, if your heart feels restless as you turn these pages, let it.

If something inside you starts stirring.... Good.

That's not fear.

That's the sky, remembering you.

Be like an albatross.

Not because flying is easy–but because staying grounded was never your destiny.



Part 1– Dream's Dawn

DREAM'S FIRST WHISPER

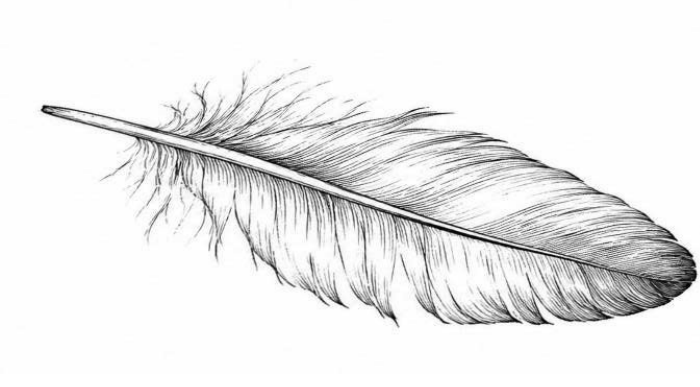
Before a dream becomes a destination,
it is only a quiet disturbance in the heart–
a little wind beneath ordinary days,
asking you to look beyond where you are.

I think dreams arrive quietly,
like rain that never knocks–
just gathers on the window
while the whole house sleeps.

You don't hear them coming.
You only wake up one morning
with a strange new ache
for a road you have never seen.

Perhaps that is how the heart speaks–
not in thunder,
but in whispers we cannot explain,
in little fires refusing to become ash again.

And maybe a dream
is simply the soul remembering
a place it has never been.



There was something
I wanted with embarrassing hunger–

so, I hid it beneath
reasonable words.

I called it impossible,
impractical,
perhaps not for me.

Funny, how easily we disguise desire
when we fear its failure.

We become architects of excuses,
building careful walls
around the very door
we secretly wish to open.

But a true dream is stubborn.

It keeps knocking
even after you pretend
you cannot hear.

Perhaps dreams begin with envy–
not the bitter kind,
but the strange ache
of seeing someone become
what you once imagined.



When the light falls on you
and suddenly
you notice your own darkness.

Maybe jealousy is sometimes
a compass in disguise–

pointing quietly
towards the country
your heart still wants to visit.

So, when another person's wings
make you question your own,

Don't curse the bird.

Ask yourself
why the sky suddenly matters so much.

Never laugh at a small dream.

A seed looks foolish
to anyone who has never seen a forest.

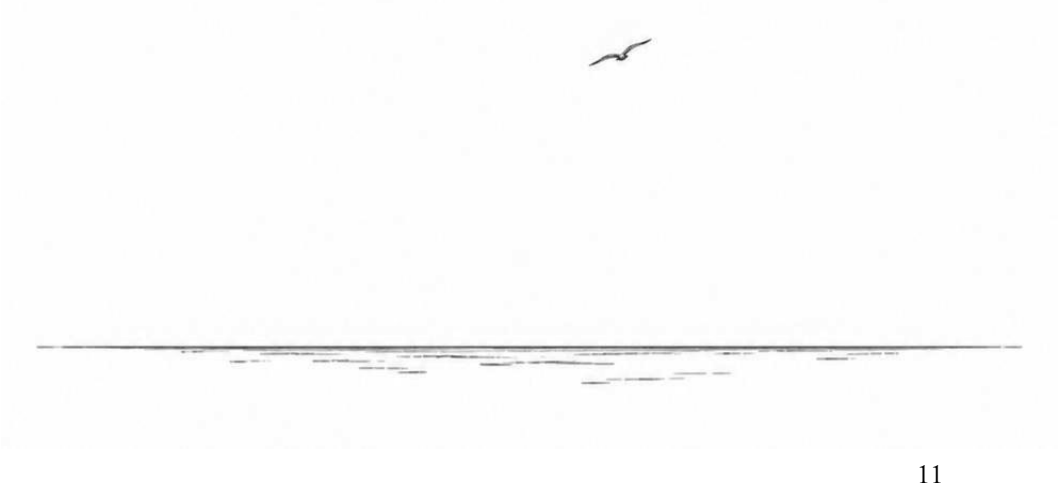
A match is only a little flame
until darkness gives meaning.

The ocean, too,
began somewhere–

perhaps as one stubborn drop
refusing to disappear.

So let your dream be small
if it needs to be.

The sky has never asked
the first feather
to know the whole bird.



ALTITUDE: 1,200 FT

STIRRING WITHIN

Sometimes becoming begins
with the quiet discomfort
of no longer fitting
inside the life that once felt like home.

Nothing changed–

The same walls,
the same window,
the same morning light
falling across the floor.

Yet something in me
had quietly moved.

Perhaps we don't always leave places
before we outgrow them.

Sometimes the room remains the same
while the person inside it
becomes too large for it.

And that is a strange kind of loneliness–

to be standing
exactly where you were
and still feel yourself
becoming someone new.



There is a quiet grief
in outgrowing yourself.

The old dreams become rooms
you can no longer sleep in.

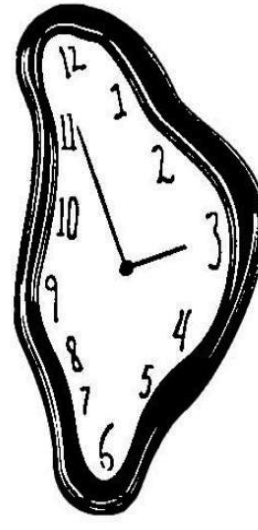
Old fears sit strangely
inside your newer skin.

You miss who you were–
even while knowing
you cannot become them again.

But perhaps becoming
has always carried a little mourning.

Butterflies do not hate cocoons.

It simply cannot live there forever.


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One morning
I looked into the mirror
and found a stranger–

Not because my face had changed,
but because my eyes
had learned another language.

I had begun wanting things
I once thought were foolish.

I had begun questioning
what I once accepted.

Maybe growing up
is not becoming somebody else.

Maybe it is finally meeting
the person who was waiting
behind all the versions
we performed for everyone else.



ALTITUDE: 2,800 FT

SEEING BEYOND THE HORIZON

The horizon never promises arrival.
It only leaves enough distance
for the heart to believe
there is still more.

I used to think
the future had to resemble
something I already knew.

A familiar road.
A familiar name.
A familiar kind of success.

Then I looked farther.

The horizon taught me
that distance is not emptiness.

Sometimes the unknown
is simply a country
we have not learned to name.

And perhaps imagination
is the first passport
we give ourselves.



The horizon kept moving.

Every time I thought
I had finally reached it,
it stepped a little farther away.

At first, I called that cruelty.

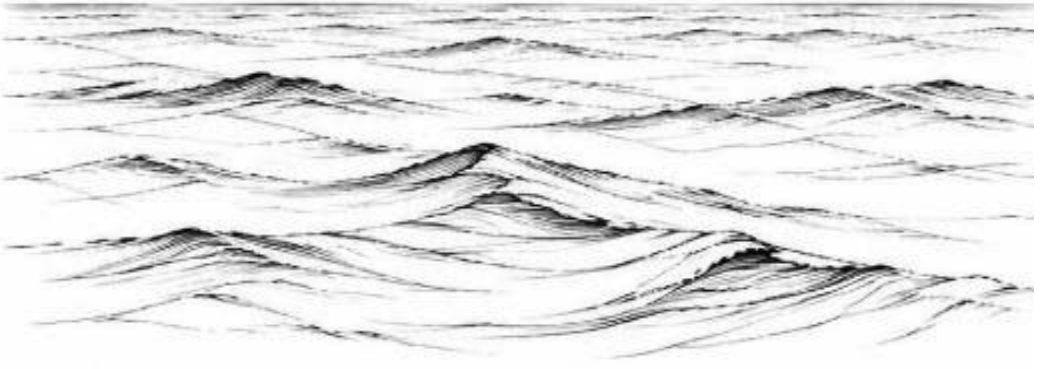
Later, I understood–

Perhaps the horizon moves
because life is not a finish line.

Perhaps arriving
was never the lesson.

Perhaps the point
was to keep becoming
as long as there was
blue left above us.





I don't need
to know the whole road.

A star never explains
where the night will end.

A river does not demand
a map before it moves.

So, I will take tomorrow
the way the sea takes wind–

without asking
where every current leads.

Maybe certainty
is not courage.

Maybe courage
is walking into the mist
with enough faith
to take the next step.



One day
I want to look back
and recognize the distance.

Not just the places I reached,
but the fears I crossed.

The versions of myself
I had to leave behind.

The night when I nearly turned around.

Because perhaps a life
is not measured
by how far we travelled–

but by how many times
we chose the horizon
over the harbor.



Part 2 – Taking Flight

ALTITUDE: 4,500 FT

FIRST STEPS OFF THE EDGE

There comes a moment
when the edge becomes less frightening
than the thought of spending your whole life
wondering what was beyond it.

The edge looked beautiful
until I stood upon it.

From a distance,
courage is poetry.

Up close,
it is a trembling hand,
a dry throat,
a thousand questions
asking you to stay.

Still–

There are moments
when the heart must choose
between the comfort of the nest
and the uncertainty of wind.

I stepped up.

And for one impossible second,

I understood
why birds trust the air.



Nobody told me
the first attempt
would look so ordinary.

No thunder.

No applause.

No sudden transformation.

Just one small step
followed by another–

and the quiet embarrassment
of being a beginner.

Perhaps beginnings
are supposed to look unimpressive.

A sunrise does not announce itself
as a masterpiece.

It simply makes
the darkness less certain.



I was waiting
to become fearless.

Years passed.

Fear remained.

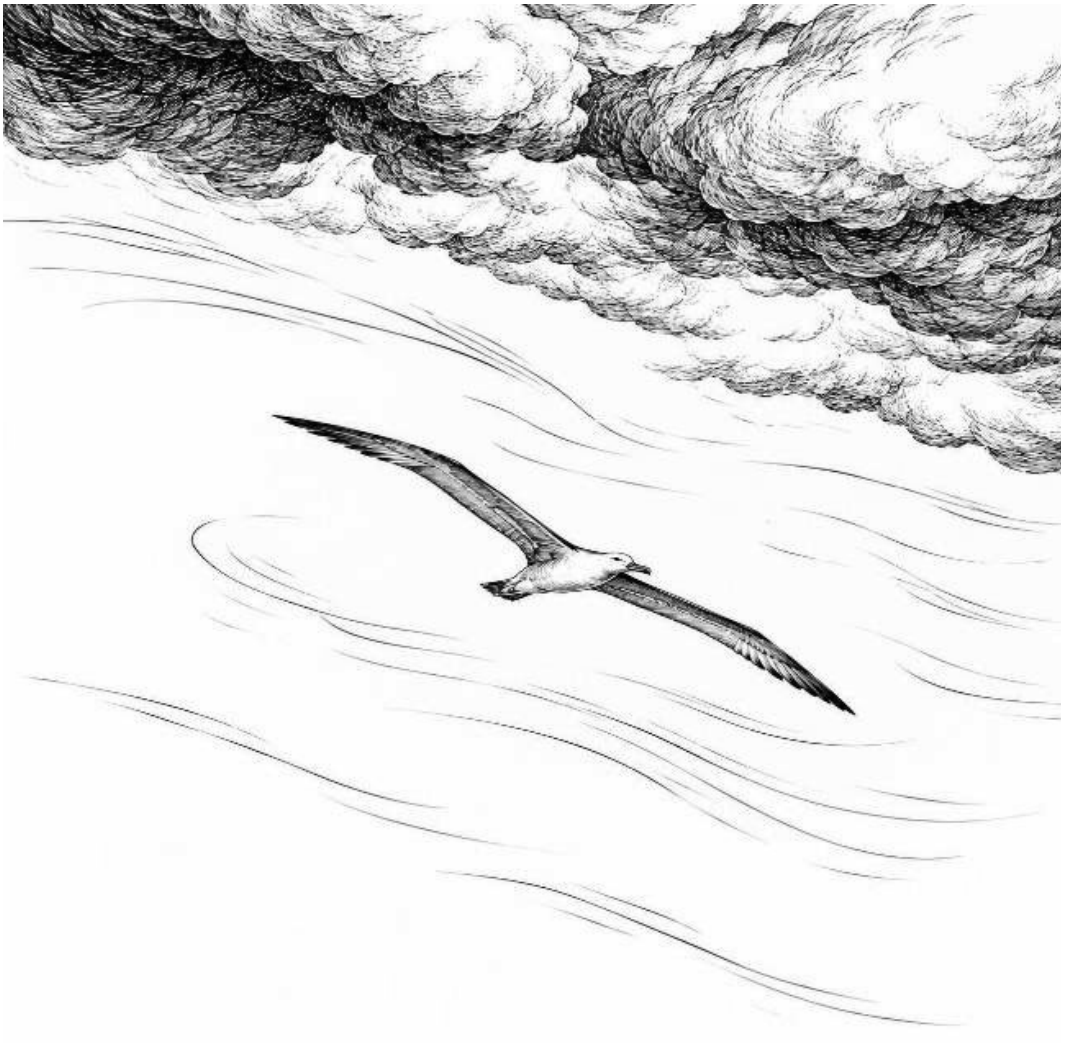
So, I stopped waiting. I stopped waiting.

Perhaps bravery
was never the absence of trembling.

Perhaps it was trembling
and moving anyway.

A feather does not ask the wind
whether it is strong enough.

It simply discovers
what the wind can teach.



If you ask me
when I became brave,

I won't remember the date.

There was no ceremony.

No version of me
woke up suddenly fearless.

I think courage arrived
in small clothes–

in every try again,
every maybe,
every morning
I chose not to quit.

Perhaps bravery
is not a moment.

Perhaps it is a habit
we build quietly
until one day
we realize we have wings.



ALTITUDE: 7,000 FT

EMBRACING THE WINDS

The wind does not always carry you
where you planned to go.
Sometimes it changes your direction
so you can discover
another name for home.

I wanted gentle winds.

Life gave me the weather.

I wanted roads that opened.

Life gave me turns.

I wanted answers.

Life gave me questions
with longer shadows.

Perhaps I was asking the wrong thing.

The wind was never meant
to make the journey easy.

It was teaching me
how to remain airborne.



The wind changed my direction
and I called it a failure.

How strange–

We praise rivers
for changing course
but blame ourselves
for doing the same.

Perhaps the detour
was not a detour at all.

Perhaps some roads
only look wrong
because we are reading them
from the beginning.



I stopped asking for life
to be easier.

Not because pain became beautiful–

It didn't.

But because I learned
that even difficult weather
has something to teach.

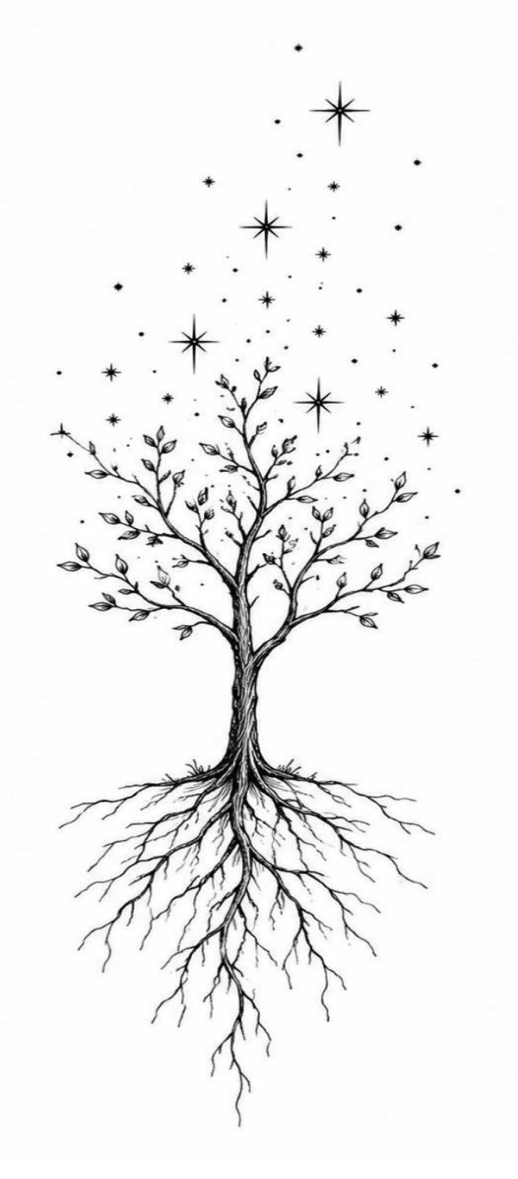
The storm taught balance.

The distance taught patience.

The silence taught listening.

And the wind–

The wind taught me
that resistance and surrender
are sometimes
two names for the same wisdom.



Let the wind come.

Let it rearrange
the feathers you thought
were perfectly placed.

Let it interrupt
the map.

Let it turn on the page
before you are ready.

Some things are not destroyed
when they are disturbed.

Some things
finally learn their shape.



ALONE IN THE SKY

Solitude is not always an empty room.
Sometimes it is the first quiet place
where your own voice
becomes impossible to ignore.

There were days
when nobody understood me.

I used to think
that meant I was alone.

Now I know–

some journeys
cannot be translated
for people who are not walking them.

The moon does not explain itself
to every window.

It simply keeps shining
through the glass.



At some height,
you stop hearing
what everyone else thinks.

The noise becomes smaller.

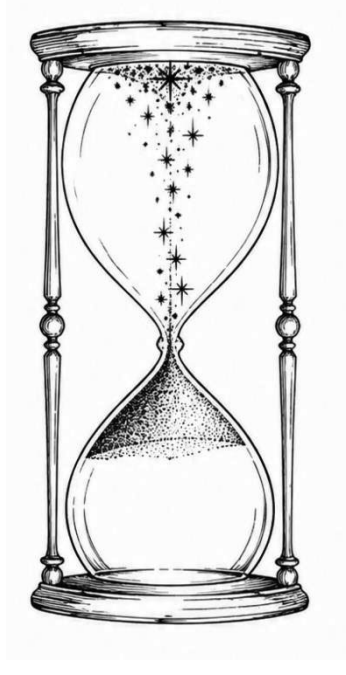
Opinions become distant.

And somewhere between
the clouds and your own breath,

you finally hear
the question beneath every question:

What do you want
when nobody is watching?

Perhaps that is where
a true self begins.



I learned that being alone
is not always loneliness.

A room can be crowded
and still feel empty.

A quiet evening
can feel like company.

There are silences
that abandon us–

and silences
that return us to ourselves.

I began to love
the second kind.



Nobody saw
how many times
I almost turned back.

They saw the distance.

They never saw any doubts.

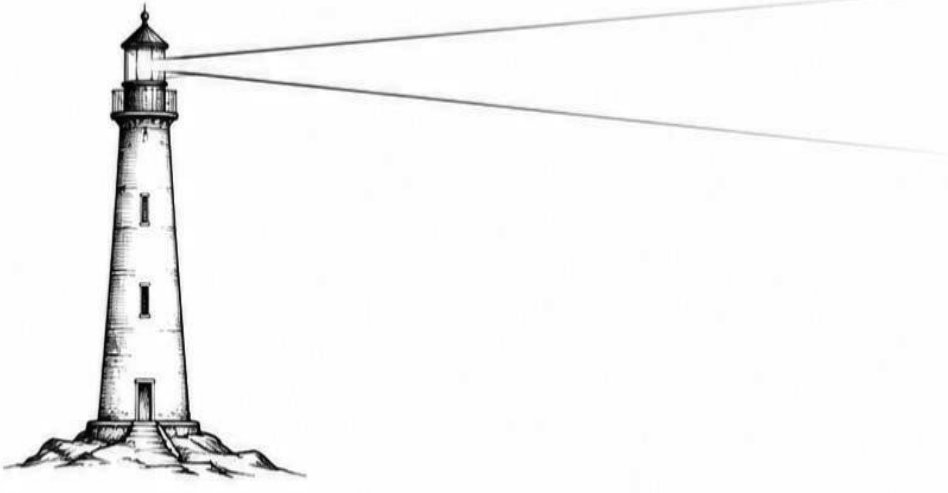
They saw the photograph.

They never saw the weather.

But perhaps that is all right.

Not every struggle
needs witnesses.

Some victories
are private conversations
between a tired heart
and the courage
to continue.



Chapter-2
Between Storms and Horizons

Not every flight is graceful.
Some are loud with thunder, heavy with doubt, and stitched together by fear you never planned to carry.

This is the part no one romanticizes.

The sky is no longer gentle like it was at the beginning.
The winds argue with your wings.
The horizon feels close enough to believe in, yet far enough to hurt.

Here, dreams don't whisper anymore – they demand endurance.

You learn that courage is not always loud.
Sometimes it is simply staying airborne when everything inside you begs to land.
Sometimes it is choosing the unknown ahead over the familiar pain behind.

Storms arrive unannounced.
They test the strength of your wings, the depth of your faith, and the honesty of your desire to keep going.
And yet, somewhere between the chaos above and the ocean below, you realize something quietly powerful–

You are still flying.

This chapter belongs to the in-between souls.
Those who hadn't arrived but refused to turn back.
Those who learned that growth happens not at the destination,
but ***between storms and horizons****.*



Part 1 – Mid-Air Challenges

ALTITUDE: 7,500 FT

WHEN STORMS GATHER

A storm does not ask
whether you are ready.
It simply arrives–
and leaves you to discover
what your wings remember.

The clouds came slowly.

First, a little grey
at the edge of the morning.

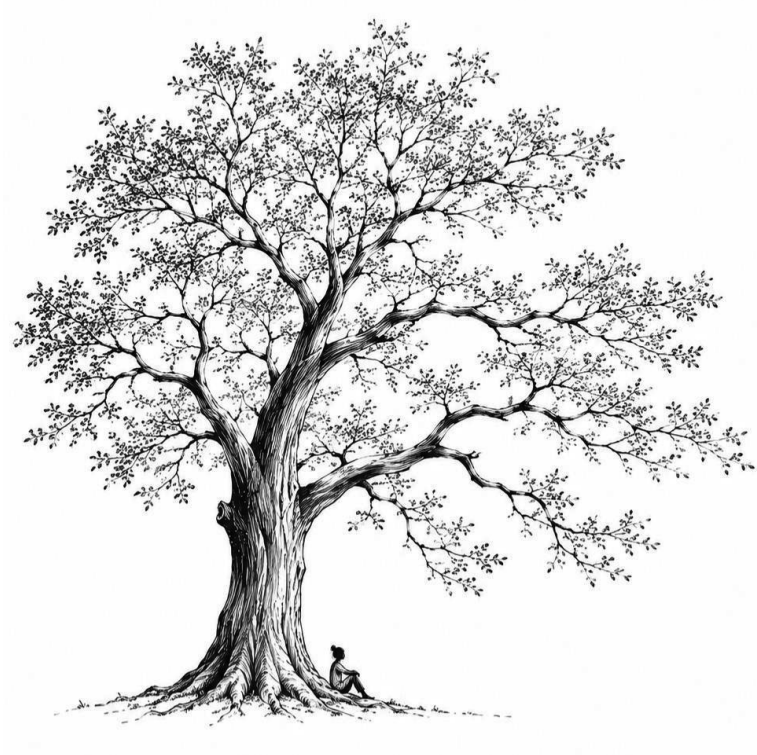
Then another.

Then suddenly
the whole horizon
had forgotten its color.

I thought storms would announce themselves.

Sometimes they don't.

Sometimes they begin
as one unanswered question
inside the heart– and grow.



I thought strong people
didn't struggle like this.

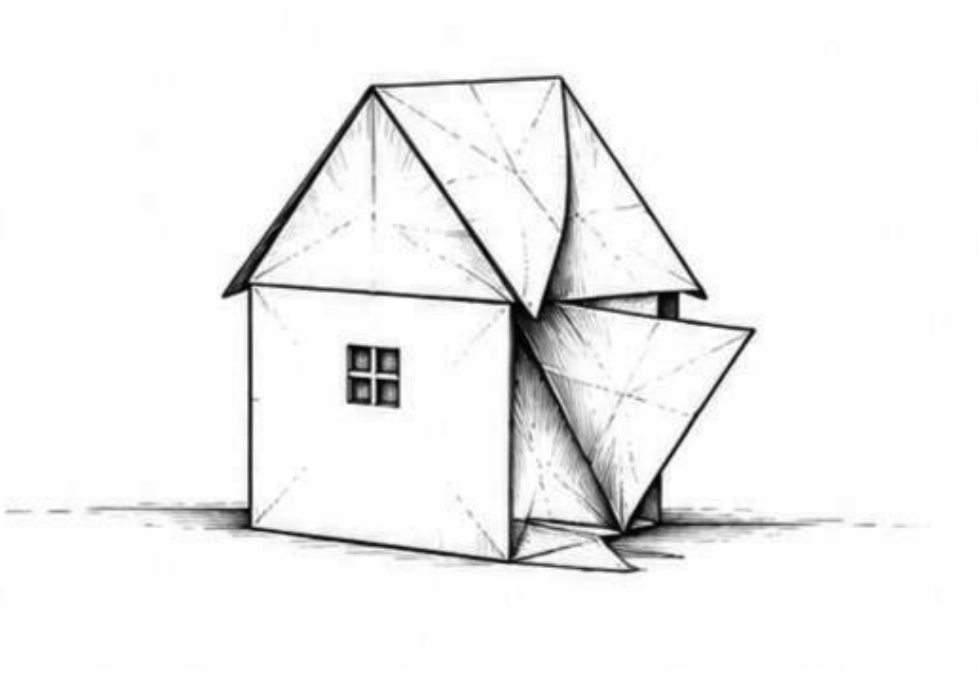
Then I met the ocean.

It carries storms
and remains in the ocean.

I met trees
that bent in heavy rain
without apologizing for their roots.

Perhaps strength
was never about standing untouched.

Perhaps strength
is knowing when to bend
without becoming broken.



Some storms
don't destroy you.

They introduce you
to rooms inside yourself
you never knew existed.

You discover patience there.

You discover grief.

You discover a strange
and stubborn kind of hope.

And when the clouds finally move,

you realize—

the person who entered the storm
and the person who leaves it
may share the same name,

but they do not carry
the same sky.



ALTITUDE: 2,000 FT

FALLING YET RISING

Falling is not always the end of a flight.
Sometimes the ground is simply
where we learn
how much we still want the sky.

I fell.

Not beautiful.

Not like the stories say.

There was no music
waiting beneath that moment.

Just silence.

Just dust.

Just me
wondering whether
one fall could erase
everything that came before it.

Then I looked up.

The sky had not closed.



Again.

Such a small word.

Yet it has carried
more dreams
than certainty ever has.

Again, after failure.

Again, after doubt.

Again, the world
has convinced you
that once should have been enough.

Perhaps persistence
is not a grand quality.

Perhaps it is simply
the courage
to whisper again
when never sounds easier.



I used to think
failure meant
the dream had rejected me.

Now I think
failure is sometimes
the dream changing its question.

Not–

Can you succeed?

But–

Can you become someone
who keeps becoming
even when success
is late?

Some lessons
arrive wearing the clothes
of disappointment.



ALTITUDE: 3,800 FT

WINGS BRUISED, HEART STRONG

"Strong wings are not untouched wings.
They are wings that have known the weather
and still remember
the shape of opening".

My wings have marks.

I used to hide them.

As though every scar
were evidence
that I had flown incorrectly.

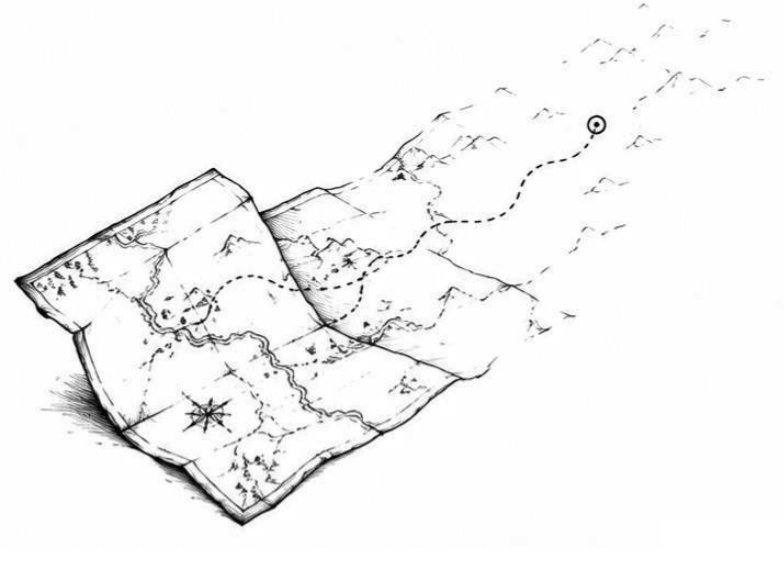
Now I see them differently.

The sky leaves nothing untouched.

Even the strongest feathers
carry stories
of the weather.

Perhaps healing
is not becoming unmarked.

Perhaps it is learning
not to be ashamed
of the map your wounds have drawn.



I don't want
to become hard
because life is hard.

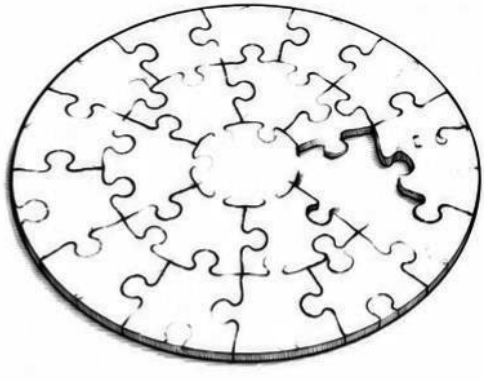
I want to remain soft
without becoming fragile.

Like the sea–

deep enough
to hold storms,

gentle enough
to hold the moon.

There is courage
in keeping tenderness alive
after the world
has given you reasons
to lose it.



The storm took things.

Plans.

People.

Certainties.

Little pieces of the future
I had carefully arranged.

For a while,
I thought loss meant emptiness.

Then I learned–

A tree can lose its leaves
and still keep its seasons.

Perhaps what leaves us
does not always leave us empty.

Sometimes it leaves space
for a different kind of life.



Part 2– Reaching Horizons

ALTITUDE: 6,500 FT

THE FIRST SIGHT OF LAND

Hope does not always arrive
like sunrise.
Sometimes it is only
the first pale colour
convincing you
that night will not last forever.

One morning,
I noticed something different.

The same window.

The same world.

But somewhere beyond
the tired blue,

there was colour.

Small.

Almost invisible.

Yet enough.

Perhaps hope
does not enter our lives
with trumpets.

Perhaps it begins
as one quiet thought:

Maybe.



Look how far you came.

Not because the road
was kind.

Not because you never doubted it.

Look at the distance
between who you were
and who you are now.

There are miles
inside a person
that no map can measure.

Sometimes the greatest journey
is the one nobody saw.


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I used to think
arrival meant
everything would finally make sense.

The questions would disappear.

The wounds would close.

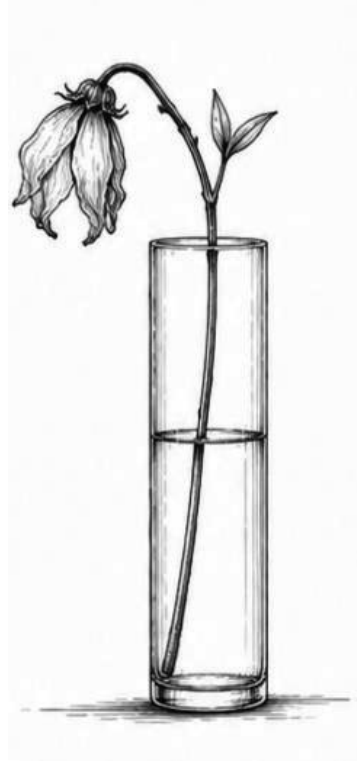
The horizon would stop moving.

But when I reached
the place, I had prayed for,

I found myself
still becoming.

Perhaps arrival
was never an end.

Perhaps it was simply
a quieter beginning.



ALTITUDE: 1,000 FT

TOUCHING DOWN IN TRIUMPH

'Not every victory is a higher flight.
Some are quiet landings–
moments when you finally realize
you have come home to yourself.

I arrived.

And there was no applause.

No crowd.

No golden sky
opening above me.

Just an ordinary day
and an ordinary silence.

Yet somewhere inside,

Something rested.

Perhaps some victories
are meant to be felt
rather than announced.

Perhaps peace
is applause enough.



I am proud of myself.

Not because I won
every battle.

I lost some.

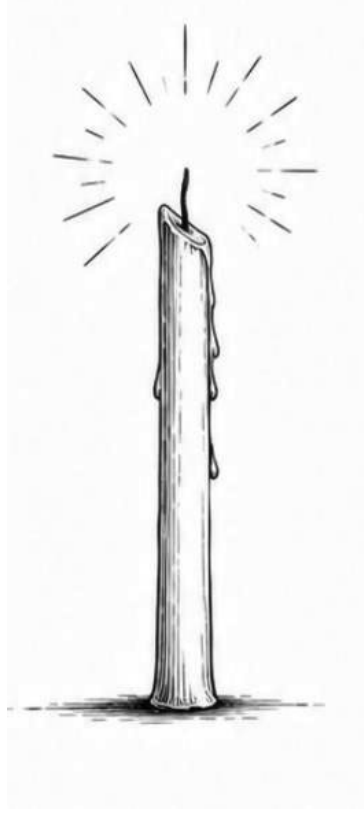
I left some unfinished things.

I changed my mind
about others.

But I stayed long enough
to meet myself
after the storm.

And maybe that
is a victory too–

to become someone
your younger self
would feel safe with.



If I could meet
the younger version of me,

I would not tell them
how everything ends.

I would simply sit beside them
and say–

Keep the wonder.

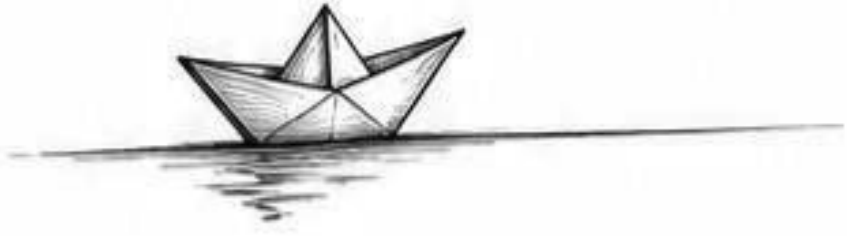
Keep asking.

Keep writing
in the margins.

Keep looking upward
even when the world
teaches you to look down.

Somewhere ahead,

You will understand
why you had to become
the person you were afraid of.



ALTITUDE: 12,000 FT

THE NEXT JOURNEY AWAITS

You reach one horizon
only to discover
that the world has been quietly
keeping another one for you.

I reached the horizon.

And it was beautiful.

But beauty, I learned,
does not always mean finishing.

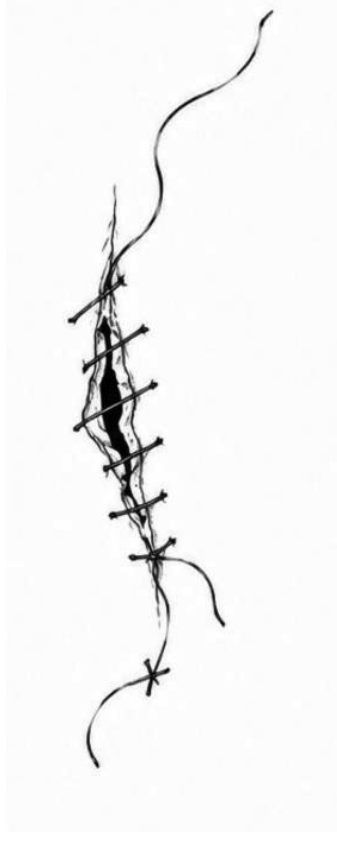
Beyond that line
was another distance.

Another morning.

Another version of me
waiting somewhere
I could not yet see.

Perhaps the horizon
was never a wall.

Perhaps it was an invitation.



Don't stop
because you have finally arrived.

A bird does not mistake
one branch for the whole tree.

A river does not end
because it reaches one shore.

There will always be
another question,

another road,

another impossible thing
calling softly
from beyond the visible.

Maybe that is not restlessness.

Maybe that is life
remaining alive inside you.



So, keep going.

Not because
you owe the world
a masterpiece.

Not because
you must become extraordinary.

Go because somewhere
between the wind
and the water,

There is still a version of you
you have never met.

And perhaps the greatest journey
is not towards a place.

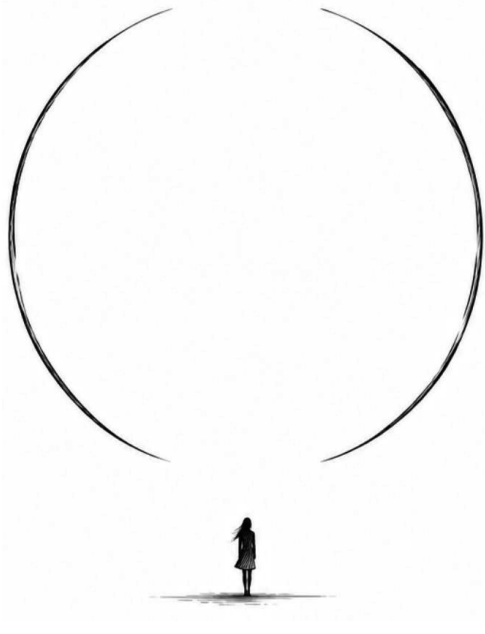
Perhaps it is toward
the person you become
while trying to reach it.

The sky is still wide. Your story is still unfinished.

And unfinished things
are not failures.

Sometimes,

they are simply
still becoming.



THE ARCHIVE

The Wrong Ghost

I met a ghost yesterday.
It knew my childhood better than I did.
It remembered the girl who ran in the rain,
the one who thought every goodbye was temporary.
I asked, "Who are you?"
It said, "The person you buried without dying."
Strange–
I had spent years afraid of ghosts,
never realizing I had become one.
A body with a pulse,
a house with no one home.
It followed me into mirrors,
sat quietly behind my eyes,
and waited for me to remember.
But memory is a cruel locksmith–
it opens doors only after you've stopped knocking.
So I stopped asking where she went.
Perhaps she never left.
Perhaps I simply became too unfamiliar to recognize her.

The Museum of Me

I built a museum inside my chest.
Every room contained something I couldn't keep.
A laugh first.
A name in the second.
A dream I abandoned in the third.
There was no room for happiness–
it kept escaping the exhibits.
Visitors came and called it healing.
I called it organization.
Look, I said,
everything has its place now.
But at midnight,
the paintings changed themselves.
The girl in every portrait
started looking more like me.
And I understood the oldest trick of memory:
we don't preserve the past.
We preserve the version of ourselves
we were afraid to lose.

A Body Full of Footnotes

I became a sentence
everyone kept editing.
Mother added caution.
Love added silence.
Fear underlined everything twice.
Society corrected my handwriting.
By twenty,
I had more footnotes than dreams.
People said I was complicated.
No–
I was heavily annotated.
Every scar had an explanation,
every silence a reference,
every smile a missing paragraph.
Then one night,
I tore the pages out.
The story looked unfinished.
For the first time,

It also looked like mine.

The Last Version

There were seventeen versions of me.
Version one believed everyone.
Version four learned to lie.
Version seven stopped asking why.
Version eleven learned how to leave first.
Version fourteen forgot how to stay.
Version sixteen smiled beautifully.
Everyone loved sixteen.
I did too.
Until I found version seventeen
crying in an old notebook.
She had written one sentence:
"Please don't turn me into someone survivable."
I finally understood.
Sometimes growing up
isn't becoming stronger.
Sometimes it is becoming easier to lose.

The Language of Leaving

I learned goodbye before hello.
It was the first language fear taught me.
Leave before they leave you.
Forget before you are forgotten.
Break the door before it closes.
I became fluent.
Soon, I could leave anything–
rooms, people, dreams, myself.
Everyone called it independence.
Nobody noticed the trembling.
Years later,
someone asked me to stay.
I laughed because I had forgotten how.
Perhaps love isn't always a person.
Sometimes it is a place
that asks you not to disappear.
And perhaps healing begins
when leaving is no longer your only vocabulary.

The Person After the Person

Who are you after losing yourself?
Not the answer.
The question.
Because some endings don't destroy you–
they remove the name you answered.
You wake up nameless,
carrying habits that belong to a stranger.
You laugh at jokes you don't find funny.
You chase dreams, you don't remember choosing.
You call it life.
Then one ordinary morning,
you want something for no reason.
A song.
A road.
A little more skies.
And suddenly, there you are–
not the person you were,
not the person they made you,
but someone finally being born
without anyone else's permission.

A Letter for You

If you're holding this book in your hands right now,

I want you to pause for a second.

Breathe.

Because this book was never just about words, poems, or chapters.

It was about you even before you knew it.

Throughout these pages, I spoke about dreams, fear, courage, loneliness, hope, falling, flying, and finding the horizon again.

But what I was really talking about... was the quiet life we all live inside ourselves.

I wrote about beginnings because I know how fragile they feel.

I wrote about storms because I know how unfair they can be.

I wrote about flight because I know how terrifying it is to trust your own wings.

And I wrote about horizons because I know how badly we all need something to believe in.

If at any point you felt seen

if a line stayed with you longer than it should,

If a poem reminded you of a version of yourself, you almost forgot then this book did what it was meant to do.

You don't have to be fearless to move forward.

You don't have to be strong every day.

You don't even have to know where you're going.

You just have to keep choosing the sky over the cage.

Like the albatross, you were never meant for short flights.

You were made for distance.

For patience.

For storms that shape you instead of stopping you.

And if today you feel tired, lost, or unsure, that's okay.

Rest if you must.

But don't forget who you are.

You are still coming.

Still flying.

Still closer to your horizon than you think.

Thank you for trusting my words.

But more than that, thank you for trusting yourself enough to keep reading.

This is not the end.

It's just another place where the sky begins.

– With love,
From someone who is flying too

HEY WAIT!

Before you close this book,
leave something of yourself here.

Not for perfection.
Not for anyone else.

Just for you.

You may write, draw, scribble, cross things out, or leave it half-empty.
There is no right way to fill this page.

Write the truth.
Write the fear.
Write the dream you've been afraid to name.

One day, when you return to this page,
I hope you smile at how far you've flown.

Take your time.

The sky is still open.

This Page Is Yours.

About The Author

GARGI CHOUDHARY

I have always found it easier to write
the things I cannot say out loud.

Somewhere between unfinished thoughts,
quiet observations, and pages filled with words
that were never meant for anyone else,
I found writing.

I write about becoming–
about the strange space between who we are
and who we are slowly learning to be.

About dreams that feel too large to explain.
About expectations that sometimes make us question
our own voice.
About growing up, getting lost, beginning again,
and finding pieces of ourselves in unexpected places.

I don't think writing is about having all the answers.

For me, it has always been about asking better questions–
and being brave enough to sit with them.

Be Like an Albatross grew from that place.

I wrote it for the part of us that has a dream
but is afraid of the distance between the dream
and reality.

For the days when the weather changes,
the horizon moves farther away,
and we begin wondering whether we were ever meant
to make it there.

Perhaps we were never meant to wait
for perfect weather.

Perhaps we were only meant to begin.

I am still learning what my own horizons look like.
I am still becoming, still questioning, still writing.

And maybe that is the most honest thing
I could tell you about myself–

I don't have a whole map.

I'm learning the way forward
one page at a time.

This is my first book.

And like me,
it is still becoming.

Keep flying.

Follow me on INSTAGRAM- @lonely.liliess