

Red Bird

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A (majorly) short story for a contest.



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Red Bird

I sit on the roof in my pyjamas, Scooby Doo boxers and an oversized Mario shirt. The coarse shingles dig into my thighs. It's cold and I didn't think to bring a sweater.

I hold a box of matches in one hand, an image of a bird printed on the front and the words "Red Bird" written just above it. I don't know why he gave it to me; it's given me nothing but trouble. And yet I take a match out of the container and strike it on the red lining the box. The flame ignites.

Orange and red reach up to the night sky. The flame wants to touch the stars. It wants to fly away from earth and become one itself. It doesn't want to spend its short life on a stick waiting to burn away or be wiped out by a strong wind or determined breath.

And I understand.

Our fates are determined by our superiors. We don't have as much choice as they lead us to believe. For once I am more powerful than something. The fate of this flame depends on my actions.

I throw it off the roof.

It lands in a pile of dry leaves and soon the flame becomes a raging fire. I watch as the flames lick at the trees in the garden. They travel higher and further and faster. Soon my house is at its mercy. The fire curls around its wooden frame, embracing it in a deadly warm hug. Sparks fly and land far away setting light to the grass and the fence.

I listen to the wood cracking under the heat of red. I listen to the popping of the fire as it jumps up, giddy and excited.

Soon the fire is upon me. The house sinks and parts of it crumble away completely. There's a loud crash as to my left a section of the building tumbles to the ground and is immediately swallowed up by the anticipating flames.

Maybe it's not a star but it's now something larger than I'll ever be.

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