

Sahil Armaan Kumar

CW 100

Joey's Journey

I am small, an insignificant little thing,

Holding on, my heart in my hands, as my world

Is constantly rocked, back and forth,

Up and down, always moving.

Finally, we are still, and I clamber

Up through the brown jungle,

Soft grass brushing my face,

Till I see the Pouch- my destination.

I rush, my small arms and legs

Struggling to match the rapidness

Of my breath, and gasp as my hand grabs

Bare skin, unprotected.

I pull myself over, sliding down

Into my new home and

Curl up at the bottom, warmth

Spreading through my body.

My mouth rests on a small,

Nob like thing; I am curious,

I suck and suddenly a delicious flavour

Floods my mouth, overwhelming.

Like this I go on, the next

Few months, nested in the Pouch,

Warm, full, safe from any harm,

Till finally, it is time.

I peek out, long ears slowly protruding

From my home, the cold cutting through

My new fur, skin shattering like glass

Against the savage wind.

I seek the warmth, the comfort

Of my prior home, but know I must leave

And move on, so I hop out, confidence adding

Spring to my step, finally tasting the true outside.

I jump around, turning to take it all in,

The dazzling light of a thousand stars

Beautifully contrasted by the black, midnight

Sky, the refreshing scent of rain on dry ground.

I look further into the distance and see fireflies

Flying towards us with magnificent speed,

Tens of them, no, more, hundreds,

All in what appears to be pairs?

No! I turn, jumping back into my home,

Somersaulting through the air, head first.

Those were no fireflies, those were eyes

Glowing yellow in the darkness, approaching

Fast, too many to count. Scared, I curl up

Again, like the first time I was in the Pouch,

Only this time, I am too large, and sit awkwardly,

Legs up in the air, arms uncomfortably tucked beneath me.

Mama realizes too late, her powerful legs give way as

They crash into her, latching on with fangs like razors,

Tearing into her, greedy, wanting more

Till there is none left to have.

Hours later I leave, lucky to be alive,
Shuddering as I stare at the bloody,
Unrecognizable mess that I spent my life in.

I hop, slowly at first, picking up speed,
Not knowing where I'm headed, not caring.

I look up as I reach a new kind of forest,
One I have not seen before.

Huge, sturdy trees with leaves that glow like dying embers,
Multicoloured animals that shoot past me,
White eyes illuminating the darkness,
Trumpets blaring, frightening me.

Still I bound forward,
That horrifying image stuck
At the forefront of my mind,
Making me sick and dizzy.
Suddenly I stop, my eyes focused
On a transparent wall, or rather,
What lies just behind.

It looks like Mama, albeit

Shaped a little differently, with

Smaller legs and longer arms and

Missing tail and horn centred on the forehead.

I read a sign above that says

“ONESIE FOR SALE”, and not knowing

What that means I proceed forward,

Strong legs kicking the wall down with ease.

I am cut all over, red gushing down, reminding me

Of earlier, taking me back to that despicable place.

I bear the pain, looking up, eyes wide as I notice

The Pouch, higher up than I’m used to, but there nonetheless.

I kick off the ground, propelling through the air, just

Reaching the Pouch, my still slender body slipping through

The round hole, falling down.

Once more, warmth embraces me and I cherish

The familiar feeling of soft fur all around me.

But this feels different, it feels fake. I don’t sense

The raising and falling of Mama's stomach,

The reassurance of her heart beating strong and fast

Against my ear.

But still, it is something.

I sleep.