Daniel G. Fitch - Catchcry

Around an ancient airplane covered in multi-colored corals, the broadclub cuttlefish bobbed and pulsed.

An older, larger matriarch stared at the frame of the jet plane, thinking aloud through the patterns in her chromataphores. "During those times, we took the human tendency to cluster in groups as a warning. In those days, the air-world was terrifying. We were more solitary. We tried to leave... no trace."

Her young daughter slid deftly between the anemones crowding in the empty windows. "So this skeleton was once a monster from the air-world?"

"Indeed. A monster to ferry the humans back and forth through the air. Unlike our techromats, it flew using small controlled explosions, fueled from dinosaur juice, leaving a trail of carbon behind it."

Flickering with horror, the young one jetted quickly back to its mother's protection. For a time, they pulsed slowly, communing in their emotional space, less direct concepts being exchanged and more a flow of feelings. And then the daughter flared red. "Where did the last few human-monsters go?"

"They were burning the world." Her mother sighed a long stream through her siphuncle, sinking to the ocean floor. "It is said that our ancestors scattered them in the ground-world below the air, and gave them to the deepest waters, to become part of the cycle again."

"What did the humans leave behind?"

"Their carbon, as a warning. And their stories, for us to burn."