

In my dream

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Cover by Julia Averbeck

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Content

[In my dream](#)

[Just myself](#)

[Thoughts](#)

[Abandoned](#)

[Where shall I go from here?](#)

In my dream...

In my dream I walk along a beach. It stretches as far as I can see and beyond that. I stop and look around me. The other direction looks exactly the same but I can see my traces there. In front of me, the ocean stretches towards the horizon and behind me a wall of trees blocks my way. There is just one direction in which I can walk and I am totally alone but I don't feel afraid.

Again, I start to walk in this direction without destination and sense of time. I don't care where I go to but somehow it is important to walk, although there is no real reason for that as well. After a while – it can be minutes but also hours – I stop again and stare unseeing at the ocean. There is nothing special to see beside the waves which roll onto the beach in an indefinite rhythm. The sun shines warmly through the thin clouds and makes me sleepy. I lie down on this beautiful sand and look dreamily up into the sky.

Sand flows through my hands and a smile appears on my face. I close my eyes and wait – for an eternity it seems. When I open them again, I feel a wave of happiness cursing through me. You are here, you came back to see me. I can't suppress the urge to laugh and you bend down to me to remove a strand of hair from my face. Smiling, you help me to get up and hand in hand we start to walk again. One trace in the sand suddenly splits into two. I am happy

about your closeness and we know what the other one feels even without words. You look down at me and what I can read in your eyes, catches the breath in my throat. Nobody has looked at me like this before.

You put your arm around me and my head settles on your shoulder. The wind and the sound of the waves aren't important anymore because the only thing that counts is you and me. A tear rolls down my face without me noticing it but you see it and wipe it away tenderly. I can see this pain in your eyes too which I can feel in my heart. You close your arms around me and hold me like you don't want to let me go anymore but we both know that we will be separated again soon.

My tears flow freely down my face when you put your hands around it and I can see the hint of tears in your eyes as well. You bend forward to kiss me and in this kiss I can taste the chaos of our feelings. We hold onto each other like drowning people but the next second my arms are empty and I wake up in my bed. My face is wet from tears and I can still feel your kiss on my lips.

I know you are somewhere out there in the world and at the moment you are as lonely as I am. If we find each other, I can't tell but I know my dreams always bring me to you.

Just myself

I walked into the world with open eyes but the world saw me, too. To fit in, to merge into it, I had to change which I achieved. Now I belonged here and therefore I looked around the world. Some things astonished me and some things left me awestruck. I looked around like a child who discovered all these new things and couldn't believe what it saw. The world gave me something to look at and I looked at it.

With time I adapted more to the world and the world saw me now as a part of itself. I belonged to this world and I was a part of it. But this didn't only bring me joy because now I could see behind the facade and I could see that there was more than the beauty.

I saw the people who were different and didn't get along as well as I did. That there was poverty and hunger I hadn't known before, although I walked around with open eyes. My heart grew heavy but I looked closer and wanted to know more about it. I saw more awful things, like useless killings and hurting other people. My soul cried out and bitter tears flew over my face but I searched further for good things and I found them as well.

But for all the good things I found, I saw more bad things. I didn't understand why the world could let something like that happen at all. My heart didn't comprehend the cruelty with which people treated each other. A thought formed in my head that I could do something against it, to stand on the side of the good and so I shouted it into the world. After a while I noticed that my voice was too weak and disappeared in the chorus of the others, not heard by the world, not understood.

My will broke on the cliffs of the world and I lived the illusion and closed my eyes and my heart. I lived my life without noticing other people or caring for them. My heart was surrounded by an armour, stronger than steel, to save my tortured soul from the cruel world. Now I lived in the world of illusions and dreams and I had forgotten to be myself. I became a part of the world; I was changed until I fitted in and walked through life with closed eyes.

Suddenly a voice sounded inside of me, weak at first but then it grew stronger and it found a way through the dreams.

"Open your eyes because not everything what you see is bad. Changes come constantly but slowly and all have a beginning. You believe that you can't change anything, that you are too weak to change something in this world. But the world needs you and everyone who lives on it. Some cause great things and others change fate just by being there because they are themselves. It is always easy to fit in and please everybody else but it is difficult to go your

own way without breaking because of all the cruelty out there. Don't lock your heart from the pictures of the world but rather take them in and try to work with them because you could be the stumbling block for a change. Therefore open your eyes and be yourself."

After these words my mind understood what my heart already knew, that a small voice can bring a new melody into the world as well. The armour around my heart splintered and it beat freely in my chest. For this reason I opened my eyes again and faced the world.

And I was just myself.

Thoughts

Thoughts swirl through my head while I lie here. They jump around like table tennis balls and are sometimes so close and sometimes so far away. I can't grab them; I only have the chance to watch their course.

Questions come to my mind. Have I turned off the oven? Have I locked the front door and taken out the trash? I can answer most of them and that calms me down a bit.

I feel like I have a checklist in my head on which I have to tick off the boxes, one after the other. Fed the cat. Check. Brought the kids to school. Check. Picked up the suits of my husband from the dry-cleaner. Check.

It goes on like this for a while and I still lie there motionless. My gaze is shrouded but this isn't important right now. The list goes on and on in my head but is soon replaced by something different.

I see my parents before me who look down at me laughing and I notice that I am still a child. Then I extend my hands and jump happily into the arms of my father. The memory blurs and is replaced by another. My mother slaps my hand when I want to nibble from the dough bowl. Smiling she threatens me with her finger but when she is not looking I do it again. I am six years old.

Another jump and another memory. It is my eleventh birthday when my grandparents have given me my beloved dog Bobby. I romp around with him and we roll over the grass. A beautiful memory.

Then my first kiss with my boyfriend who nearly bit my tongue. I was sixteen and he was seventeen. We giggled and started again where we stopped, this time more relaxed. The first kiss is really something special.

The years pass by, for me to see. My 18th birthday and the big party in the garden. Getting the driver's license and my first car. The moment when I saw my future husband for the first time. I think I knew immediately that there was something special between us. Our wedding day with all the guests and congratulations for our future. Actually I had just planned a small party with our family and friends but this seemed to be impossible for us.

My pregnancy and how happy I was about this news. The complications come back to my mind as well but we mastered everything. When they put my son into my arms for the first time all worries and the pain were forgotten and my husband beamed happily at our child.

Another jump and I remember another painful moment in my life. The miscarriage I had when I got pregnant again one year after my son was born. I remember the depression and dejection which followed. But I struggled free from all of this with the help of my family and friends.

The happy moments alternate with the bad ones and seem to be in balance. I remember the birth of my second child, a baby girl, which I had expected for such a long time. The future lies ahead of me and I am not alone on my way.

Pictures spin around in my head, of my grandparents which are already dead so long now. My parents still smile at me. My husband who holds me in his arms and kisses me. My

beautiful children who play happily in our garden and who have the main roles in the school play.

Then my thoughts blur again and dissolve into a giant vortex. I can't think straight anymore, I only see pieces of my memory.

A car speeds through my head and comes closer so fast. I close my eyes and just hear the bang, feel how I fly through the air. My body lands on the street and my head crashes down. The cereals and milk for my children fall down beside me onto the street and spill over me.

My sight clears again and I can see people standing around me. One thought shoots through my head, the traffic lights were green and then there is nothing.

The light at the end of the tunnel is a lie because when you die, everything you can see is darkness.

Abandoned

Why have you done that? Why have you left? You went away without a goodbye or an explanation. You leave me behind in the chaos of my feelings and your unsolved problems. Tell me, what I shall do without you? We have done everything together; we were never really alone and we were happy this way. Or not?

We were best friends since we were little, went to school together and we were together against all odds. Sometimes we also went separate ways when we tried to find ourselves. That was how you called it.

We didn't see each other for a year but we never lost contact and wrote letters or called each other. You always told me how good it was to hear my voice.

Suddenly you stood in front of my door again and I nearly didn't recognise you anymore. You were grown up now and not the lanky boy from my past. We talked a lot about old times, about things we hadn't talked about before and it was a happy time.

Our friendship was renewed and it grew deeper but we had changed as well and saw the other one with new eyes and discovered different sides we hadn't known before. Nearly without us noticing our friendship became more, more than we ever expected or dreamed of. We discovered love, love for each other.

We experienced our first kisses and caresses and suddenly there was a timidness we hadn't expected. Before we had also touched each other but now there were these feeling, feelings which hadn't been there before and we discovered that we were just a woman and a man whose souls burned with love for the other.

Everything was wonderful and we soon started to talk about marriage and children. We trusted each other deeply and it seemed to me that it could only be like this between soul mates. We talked about everything that moved us and shared our thoughts. Or not?

Today I know that this must have been an illusion because you wouldn't have left, you wouldn't have abandoned me. If I had known what kind of thoughts were in your head, we could have solved your problems together.

But you decided to take another road, to run away from your life alone. You got into your car when I wasn't there and drove away. Then you came to the cliffs where we had spent so many beautiful hours and drove straight ahead, with closed eyes and without braking.

The car rolled over and then got stuck. Later the doctor told me you were dead immediately. In your pocket they found a piece of paper with the words "Forgive me" on it.

But how can I forgive you, that you've abandoned me?

Where shall I go from here?

Sometimes, in life, you are just stuck and that's the point where I am at the moment. I don't know what to do with my life and I don't know what to do next. My studies are finished but searching for a job just ends in frustration.

I sometimes feel like nobody wants me and that makes me sad and angry at the same time. What do you want from me? I would like to shout that in their faces. Tell me what you're looking for and I try to be what you want.

I start to think about if I have chosen the right way. Did I make the right decisions? Is this what I should do, what I want to do? Can't there be something like an oracle or a god who tells you what to do and when?

I just need some guidance, someone who takes my hand and leads me onwards. How many times have I wished for someone at my side but there is nobody. Nobody to help me, nobody to guide me out of here.

I just want something to do, a purpose in life if you want to give it a name. Maybe I also want to leave some traces behind which are telling people later, hey, I was here. Well, I guess everyone wants to leave traces, doesn't want to be forgotten.

So, here I am now, stuck in life and no real idea how to get out of this crisis. Maybe I should put a note into the paper. Something like: Stuck in life, somebody able to help me? If someone would send me an answer to my note and tells me he or she can help me, then I would want to ask one question.

Where shall I go from here?

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