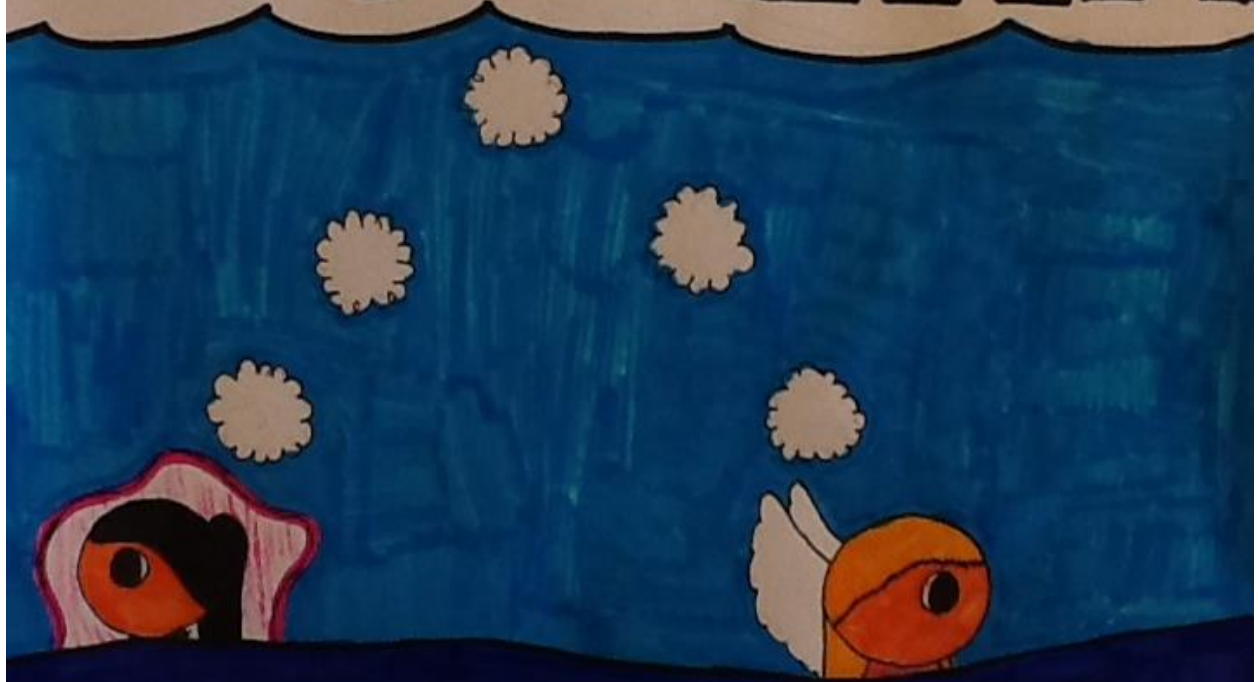


Day

DREAM



by Rosie

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I looked out. All I saw was an empty space. I felt like there was an empty space inside me too. Suddenly fog surrounded me in a large cylinder. I felt something soft and fluffy under my feet. I didn't bother to check what I was stepping on; instead I looked up through a hole in the top of the cylinder of fog. I saw sugary stars poking through the emptiness of the night sky. I looked ahead of me and pushed my hand through the fog. I expected something to happen to my hand, but nothing did. I guessed it was safe to step through, so I did.

"Woah", I said, admiring my surroundings. I was standing on a sheet of clouds, milky white. Stars fell from the sky and started zooming through the clouds. As they did, small puffs of cloud bounced into the air and vanished. I started to sink a little bit into the clouds, but I didn't fall through. Small parts of the cloud swirled over the tops of my feet, blanketing them. I felt something land on my head and settle there. The object was warm, and that warmth seemed to fill the empty space inside me. As I gently lifted it off my head I saw that it was a star, but brighter than the others. As I felt it, it made me calmer. I thought I saw someone in the distance. I couldn't quite make it out, but it looked like a girl with long black hair. I touched the star's smooth edges again, and the next thing I knew I was falling.

"AAAH!" I opened my eyes. It was morning, and the sunlight was streaming through the window on a warm spot on my bed.

"Wake up Cara, breakfast is ready!" my mom called from the kitchen. I closed my eyes.

I opened one eye and saw Katy, my little sister, throwing my stuffed banana off my bed. When she saw I was awake, she gasped and yelped excitedly.

"Can I eat your breakfast Cara? I already ate mine and I'm still hungry."

"No," I whispered. Katy put on her fake frowny face and left with my stuffed banana and monkey she picked up off my rug. After a while, I hoisted myself up and went to eat breakfast.

I was putting milk on my cheerios when Charles, my little brother, came in with his usual breakfast, toast with ketchup and hummus. Doesn't that sound delicious? He licked the goopy red and tan mess, then took a monster bite of toast. I almost barfed the first time I saw him eat it, but I got used to it. Mommie came in and sat down next to me.

"Mommie, are we doing one of those I-have-to-be-open-minded-talks again?" I asked.

"Maybe," she said.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Your Dad and I have been thinking about this for a while, and-"

"Please just get to the point!"

"We've signed you up for swim lessons," said Mommie.

Right after she said that, I felt something weird. It was like I couldn't tell the difference between what was real and wasn't real. But I felt that this was real. I ran to my room and called for Mica, my BFF. She appeared in my room.

"Hey, did you get a new teleporting power?" I asked her.

"Yup! And it's the only power I'm gonna use now!" she said proudly, and started teleporting all over my room.

"Mica! There's a reason I called you over here you know!" I said firmly.

"What is it?" she asked.

"My mom's making me take swim lessons!" I exclaimed. "In the WATER!" Mica's jaw slid open. "But then your wings will appear when you touch the water...and-and we'll have to get fire to touch your wings so they'll disappear!"

"I know," I said. A tear trickled down my cheek and Mica gave me a bear hug.

"It'll be ok Cara," she said.

But I knew nothing was going to be ok.

I walked through the pool gate and let out a big sigh. "Love you honey! Have a great day!" said Mommie as she kissed my cheek and left. I said nothing. I felt a hand on my shoulder and turned around slowly. The man who had touched me chuckled.

"I'm gonna be your swim lesson teacher," he said. I nodded, and he pulled me to a swim lane. The lane was full of kids splashing each other. I took a step back and bumped into him.

"What's wrong?" he asked, his smile fading.

"Um," I said. Someone bumped into me. I belly flopped into the water, ignoring the mild stinging pain. I dove under and started to panic. My wings would appear! This place is too public! I could hear muffled laughing and yelling above the water, and it faded as I swam deeper. I took a breath of air underwater. Yes, I know. I can breathe underwater. I felt my back. My wings were there! I kept swimming down, as coach dove in after me. I touched the bottom of the deep end when coach scooped me up. When he was above water in the shallow end, he was gasping for air. He stared at me, wide-eyed along with all the other kids in the swim lane. A tear trickled down my cheek, camouflaged by the drops of pool water.

"Mica!" I cried. Everyone at the pool was staring at me and speechless. A camera flashed. Mica teleported to me then gasped. She was up to her shoulders in water. A lady screamed. She grabbed me and teleported us to a cloud, her bare feet falling flat on it. I flapped my feathered wings with my short blonde hair blowing out behind me.

"Cara...are you crazy!? Why did you get in the water!?" Mica practically screamed in my face.

"I didn't. Somebody bumped me," I said, a bit frustrated.

"Oh," said Mica as she shook her sleeve.

"Can we go home now please?" I asked, peeking down off the cloud.

"Cara! Concentrate," Mica began. "We need your wings to touch fire to make them disappear, remember?" I nodded and she teleported us to a forest fire.

"We have to do this quick, or the firefighters will see your wings." The sequins on my swimsuit gleamed next to the fire.

"Mica wait!" I said.

"What? Please make it quick!" she said.

"Why do we need to get rid of my wings?" I asked.

"Because we're trying to get home, and when we do, we can't let anyone else see your wings. Do you know how many people at the pool stared at you? All of them!"

"Well can't you just teleport us home then?"

"Not exactly, I need a sort of power to teleport EXACTLY where I want."

"But you teleported us to this forest fire!"

"I just thought 'fire' while I teleported! Come ON we've got to hurry!"

Mica grabbed a stick and shoved the tip into the fire. A flame caught on to the stick and grew bigger as the wind pushed it. She tripped and the stick fell on my left wing. I jumped up to protect myself from getting burnt, and the wind pushed me upwards over the fire. Sweat dripped off my chin and into the fire as I used all my power to flap my one wing and fly against the wind to safety. I felt cold damp dirt on my palms and collapsed. I was exhausted. I felt my back. No wings. Sirens were howling in the distance. Something fell on my head, and I screamed in response. After that, everything went black.

I opened my eyes and jolted up. I looked around at the small room that I was in. It had plain tan peeling wallpaper and three small square windows. I was on a comfortable cot with an itchy yellow blanket. To my right Mica was staring out a window. The nightstand between us was as large as a sheet of paper. I had sweaty palms and pants and a t-shirt on instead of a swimsuit. And not knowing where I was, I screamed. A nurse came running into the room. I panicked at first, thinking I still had my wings, but then I remembered me and Mica had removed them at the forest fire.

"Is everything ok?" she asked me.

"Yes, everything's fine," said Mica, and the nurse left.

"Um...where are we?" I asked. " And WOW, are these blankets itchy!" Mica padded over to my bed on the stone floor, touching my arm.

"Hospital," she whispered, and we teleported to another place. My eyes were closed, and I flinched when icy cold snow pelted down on my arm. I had this strange delicious taste in my mouth. It was sugary and sweet, buttery, and had some hints of cinnamon in it. When I opened my eyes I was looking down. We were standing on train tracks. On stilts. Above an icy lake. And to make it even more dramatic, snow covered my face, legs, and arms. Yay. Mica was hugging me and pulled me down off the tracks. I flailed my free arm around frantically, hoping to find somewhere to grip, as a train roared above us. I saw Mica, and for some reason, I was really happy to. Mica teleported onto the ice, and I fell into the icy lake. I got my wings back and flew out of the water. As Mica was about to teleport us, I slipped and she teleported, without me.

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It was morning. I jolted up and looked around. WHAT!? The hospital AGAIN!? I screamed for the sake of it. I heard the nurse coming, so I had to go through the whole dramatic scene again. After that, I closed my eyes. I was hungry. When I opened them, I was sitting on a sheet of clouds. Something was on my head, and I was guessing it was the star. Then the star show started. I picked the star off my head, and without thinking, took a bite. It tasted so good, and the same taste I had had when Mica teleported to the lake. Suddenly, I was falling. With Mica! It took me 4 seconds to realize that I didn't have my wings (because I hadn't fallen in the lake yet) and that this was in the past with the hospital and everything. Mica let go of me and teleported to the ice. When I came on the ice out of the water (with my wings), Mica touched me. And she teleported, with me.

We appeared at a waterfall. Mica dove in, and swam through the water. I flew above her. When she was about to fall down the waterfall, I grabbed her, and yes, she teleported. We appeared on the sheet of clouds. The stars! I wanted to tell Mica all about it, so I opened my mouth to speak, but no words came out. When the whole show was over, I took my star and clutched it to my heart. Wait, I thought I had taken a bite of of the star! What? Oh, I get it; every time I get a star, it's new and refreshed. Mica clutched the star to her heart, too. Then, of course, we were falling. We landed on our street; we were home. Mica and I didn't get broken legs. We didn't get hurt at all.

"I'll see you real soon!," called Mica, running backwards down our street.

"Bye," I whispered. I ran to my front door and opened it with a great force of excitement.

"I'm home!" I yelled for everyone to hear. No one answered. I could hear voices from the dining room. When I got there, I saw ME sitting in my chair, zoning out. Mommie was sighing in the chair next to me. I shook my zoning out self back to the present, and all of a sudden, I was falling. I jolted back to the world, and I was sitting in my chair with my cheerios in front of me.

"Now sweetie, go get ready, or you'll be late for swim lessons," Mommie warned. "Plus, there is a new girl from the neighborhood stopping by who you will go to swim lessons with. You don't want to make her late, too." Just as I said I would hurry, the doorbell rang. I ran to open it. There was a familiar face at the door. I knew that face though we had never met in person.

The new girl gasped. "Is it ... really you-Cara?," asked Mica.

"Mica...?" I asked.

"Wasn't that so cool? I could teleport!" Mica said.

"And I could fly!" I said.

She had a star on her shirt, the same star I had had on my head during the daydream where we met. I looked down on my shirt. It had the exact same star.