

The White Square of Paper

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Abstract

This is a short story written by me.

Keywords: Literature, short story.

Short Story

'You have to find your own whale. You are the captain and you are sailing through your own life. You have dreams, you have goals; you need to find a whale, your own whale. Leave *Moby-Dick* alone, and think about your own. What is your deepest fear, my Captain?'

It all started like this, when she asked me about my deepest fear. Well, I thought I was fearless. But now I know. Now I know that my deepest fear was to lose her. Now I know. I know because I have lost her. I left her behind. Or maybe she left me, I can't remember. I woke up that morning, and she was gone. I opened my eyes and faced the darkness of the morning. Alone. I was alone. She was gone. She sank the ship and could not save the captain. My whale. Yes, she was my whale. But when I found out about her, I found out about my dreams, about my life. They were no more. Vanished, impossible to remember. She stole everything I had; and turned herself into a letter. That letter.

Whales, Wellinda, and whisky, that was all. That was all I needed. But after twenty years, only the whisky remains. I exhausted *Moby-Dick* years ago. There is nothing more I can learn about it. I could have been Melville himself. She gave me something else to focus on. After twenty years, I still

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have things to discover about Wellinda. I thought I knew her, now I know. Now I know her through her absence. I know her through a letter.

I have always loved whisky. I don't drink because she left me: I drink because I feel thirsty. Whisky tastes like water. I feel cold inside. I drink because I'm cold. But whisky tastes like water. Whisky feels like water. Cold water. I want to be drowned in cold water. Wrap my body in white linen, and throw me overboard. Blue, dark water. Cold water. Whisky feels like ice. I find it hard to swallow. I find life hard to swallow. I find her absence hard to digest.

And what does it mean, leaving me one morning with just this letter? Why didn't she talk to me? I wasn't drunk. She could have talked to me. I was not drunk, no, I was not drunk... She was afraid of me. She said she was afraid of me. I remember she said she was afraid of me. But I loved her. I still do. I can't love her through a letter though. I don't love the letter.

I drink because I'm alone. I drink because whisky is the only 'W' that remains in my life. I drink because. I don't know why I drink. I know that I drink. No, I don't drink because she is gone. I have been drinking for ages. I was drinking when she was not even born. She loved me when I was drunk. She loved me when she was drunk. Yes. She loved me when she was drunk. And now all I have is a sober letter; this white letter, challenging me under the door. It looks at me defiantly. It thinks I am not strong enough to open it. It is laughing at me. I can hear it laughing at me. It is filling my ears like whisky is filling my throat. But I am fine. I do not feel anything. I am fine. I am fine because I am numb.

I wish I were a squid. But then, no. Do you think squid suffer three times more because they have three hearts? Or do you think they use them one after the other? I mean, maybe when one is broken, they use the second one, so that they never grieve, they do not feel the pain. Do you think squid have broken hearts? Do they break hearts like we do? Like she did? If not, then why do they have three hearts, and we only have one? Are we meant to suffer? Does pain help us to write? Do you think squid could write? What do you think they would write? And why do they have all this ink if they cannot write? Squid would be great writers. They have infinite ink, and they have many arms; they just need paper. I wish squid could write. They would tell us about deep oceans, strange fish and whales. Whales. They would tell us about whales. They would tell us how to replace a heart when it is broken. I wish I could teach squid how to write. I wish I were a squid's teacher.

And this bottle is almost empty. I would rather say I am almost full. No, I'm empty. I'm an empty bottle of whisky. She drank me, sip by sip. And now I am an empty bottle, floating without any messages inside, waiting to be drowned by the waves. I want to rest in an ocean; an ocean of whisky. I need to open another bottle. I need to rest in an ocean. I wish I were a forgotten bottle of whisky, stored in a dry, cool place. Covered with dust. And full of whisky. I wish I was a bottle of whisky. And I would not drink it. I would keep it safe for ever. I would not drink; I would keep the whisky safe in me. And she could keep me on a shelf, on a kitchen shelf. And she would see me without seeing me. But I would be with her. And she would never empty me.

She doesn't like whisky. She wouldn't keep me in her kitchen. She walked away from my bedroom. She would not keep me in the kitchen. She would bury me in the garden, and forget about me. She would leave me there, like she left that letter, lying on the floor. I am a bottle. She left a message for the bottle. But she forgot to throw me in the sea.

The message cannot fit in me. She could not leave it in me; she had to leave it under the door. When I am sober, when I am dry, I will put the message in the bottle, and I will float endlessly on the ocean. It's always too late when someone finds one of those bottles. They will not find me, not in time. I am a bottle of whisky. I am a bottle of whisky and I am sinking. I am sinking down, down, down. I am touching the ground. And I am reaching it. I am reaching this white square. It is moving. The white square is moving. There she blows! The white whale! I am deep, deeply sinking. The white whale, the white square, I am reaching it. It is not moving. It is small; it is not Moby-Dick. It is... it is... what is it? I have the letter. But she did not leave any letters. This letter came by itself. My whale is not a letter. The letter is not a whale.

She left without leaving a letter. She left me with a doctor; she changed herself into a hospital. She disappeared. She took the colours away. I am surrounded by white walls, white people. I am a bottle of whisky with a white tag. And I am thirsty. They broke my bottle; I can see my whisky filling plastic pockets. They are taking my whisky away from me. They broke my bottle, they broke my body. I am bleeding; I am losing my whisky. They are watching me bleed, why don't they do anything? I am bleeding! Do not take my whisky away from me! I am a good bottle; I promised I would keep my whisky safe. Give my whisky back! I am bleeding. My whisky is filling their bottles.

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I do not feel anything. But they broke my bottle. And the four walls are white. And the curtains are white. And my skin is white. And everything is white.

And in this darkness, I am no more.

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