

Ouroboroseans

by

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x.

On the other side of the wall, a woman in her mid-sixties was having a nightmare. She was swinging her limbs furiously and panting heavily; she was treading a pink wheel, milling herself to the bone, to catch a glimpse of her ouroboros. Her actions were very much in vain, though, because she could not see anything through the grey matter that surrounded her. It would not go away no matter how hard she milled to reproduce ouroboros. Grey matter just kept forming, denser and denser. When it reached zero visibility, she lost her sense of reality. Then she got excited: it was her birthday!

b.

- Look what I got for my birthday!

A white fluffy one was in a small pink plastic cage. It was the size of a six-year old's fist.

- I am glad you like it. Your mother and I thought you might.

- You will take good care of it, won't you H.S.?

- You are big now. It is your responsibility to feed it and keep the cage clean, okay? And, remember, it stays in the cage.

Then, they took H.S. to a store. She picked out a pink plastic wheel, for White Fluff. She paid for it from her pocket money. The clerk at the registrar assured her, "Your pet will love it! It gets all the exercise it needs!"

The plastic wheel, cheapest of the kind, matched the pink cage. The cage now had a love-filled healthy environment. H.S. was proud of the achievement.

p.

White Fluff by nature was nocturnal.

m.

H.S. was pregnant with her first child. It was in the pastel-colored consultation rooms and examination rooms where her prenatal checkup was routinely processed.

Every time, at the end of the checkup circuit, she was heavy with fatigue. It was mental. She had a distinct sensibility that babies were framed. Pregnancy was not the issue. It was the color scheme.

Pregnancy is sold with soft pale pastel colors these days. Pink and white mostly, then blue and yellow followed. They were associated with Disney fantasies or were affixed to the cute characters. Babies were to be born into these colors.

The checkup always ended with "please make your next appointment at the receptionist." It was the same, that day, too. So, H.S. dragged her heavy body, walking like a duck, and sat on a couch close to the counter, where receptionists' soft pink uniforms glowed under the fluorescent light. The receptionists here all very professionally had Minnie Mouse eyeballs and eyelashes. When it was her turn, she booked the next checkup and paid

one of the Minnies. Then, the Minnie made the big special-for-you smile bigger, looked into her eyes, and asked in her sugary squeak:

- When would you like to sign-up for the child's birth education class?

The Minnie froze, when H.S. replied, "No, thank you." It was obvious that the Minnie could not process "no" as an answer.

H.S. felt obliged to justify. But her mind was frozen, too. She had no idea what to say, but the mouth did:

- I think I will be fine, you know, women have been giving birth from time immemorial.

H.S. was delighted and enlightened. The line melted her. The Minnie was still frozen, ice cold. H.S.'s social skill was back:

- If anything happens, I know I am in your good hands.

This worked. The Minnie thawed back to her pink sweetness, and H.S. bid her good day.

f.

People noticed H.S.'s change. "Pregnancy glows on you," they told her. H.S. knew that was because she had slid out of the pastel color pregnancy scheme. Her pregnancy was now pulsing with the rawness of life.

H.S. was curious about herself, how the mouth knew what to say; somewhere, in the deeper privacy that was unbeknownst to her conscious self, a thinking entity was there that came up with ideas, put words together, and delivered the line.

... Babe, it was you, wasn't it?

d.

The fetus is nocturnal.

t.

H.S. opens her eyes, 3am. Feeling refreshed. The environment is low on artificiality and activity. Closes her eyes and takes off to her internal adventure, devoid of any physical constraint. Alone. Absorbed. Autonomous.

H.S. finds herself inside her own skull. It is packed with chaos, with hoarded thoughts and senses. Some are hyperactive, some are way out of control, some are invisible, ... and the brain is taking the impact. They have deformed the brain. It has flattened a bit. The shape is not dissimilar to that of a butterfly, and the wings are fluttering, discharging thoughts and senses, which included herself, to the spine.

The spine ride is a hell of a ride. H.S. crashes into the placenta. *No bloody admittance to the navel cord*, her mind heard the voiceless inform. Then it sucks her in and wrings her out of the blood. She faints. When she regained consciousness, she had already left the placenta behind through one of the two arteries.

H.S.'s husband is awake. Automatically he does what he always does - turns on the T.V. The morning news reporters' voices from the T.V. are annoying. They want attention so bad. The vividness of her experience, the circular visitation to her protrusion are fading quickly. She does not want to leave it - *Wring my blood, baby. I need to faint.* Her baby-fetus is the deepest favorite private part of her.

But the external intrusion is like a taser. The noises from the T.V. shut H.S.'s absorption down.

In disappointment, H.S. opens her eyes. H.S. has to get ready to make her living. She needs to get on a joyless treadmill to make money.

The voices from the T.V. are no longer interferences for her. They entertain. TV is a great mind organizer.

H.S. opens her eyes, 2am. Feeling refreshed. She lives for this time. If she loses the ability and time to enjoy this, the making-a-living world would have perfected her as a zombie. The environment is set for her. She closes her eyes.

Her mind is passionately tracing her-baby circuit system, again and again, checks over and over on the enigma that their blood never mingles.

Her body is experiencing a constant tremble. That means her baby is in the fetal position, upside-down, pressing its head against her spine through the womb, hiccupping.

And in the tremor, H.S.'s heightened senses feel something; something is there above her spine on the right side. She intuitively makes out fuzzy whitish shades, but when she focuses on them, they disappear. She has to sense them from the corner of her mind. Vulnerability overwhelms. Distress.

The weather forecast is on T.V.

H.S. opens her eyes at 1am. Excited. It came to her out of the blue yesterday, the identity of the ephemeral shades. She almost screamed out in her delight. *Share me your fortune*. A colleague, sitting next to her, reached out her arm and placed her hand over the protrusion.

H.S. is enlivened at 1am. Closes her eyes and becomes the circuit existence. It's *ouroboros*...

It's *ouroboros*. That autonomous entity. It's tail in its mouth. Nourishing itself. Changing the thickness of its body. Changing the size of the circle. Changing its colors. Living in fear of having had to devour itself; yet, living in the joy

of eternal growth. One ecdysis after another, ouroboros slides out of the confinement.

This time, from the corner of her mind, H.S. can make the ouroboros out in the fuzzy whitish shades. The violent beatings of the butterfly are creating commotion in the skull, the baby moves further inward, quaking the body harder. Ecdysis. Ouroboros turning in a circle. The shiny head comes out first, breaking loose from the cramped skin.

n.

We are ouroboros, aren't we babe?

1.

As it is the practice of homo sapiens, H.S.'s labor had to part them into two. Their ouroboros was writhing. Violently the tail was pulled out of the mouth. Chop! The tail opened its eyes, and its mouth inhaled the first pastel air.

H.S.'s newborn was wrapped in a fluffy white cotton towel and placed in a pink cot with wheels. They put her and the baby in separate pastel rooms.

H.S. got a blue room.

All the newborns were in a pink room.

The nurses monitored the newborns, kept them under their watch 24 hours. The nurses told the new mother she was wasted. She needed to rest and recover. They said when her newborn cried, they would bring the cot over to her room so that she could nurse.

However, the nurses not once had to wheel it to H.S., for she would appear in the pink room as the baby started crying. The baby and H.S., their systems were still

connected. H.S. knew her baby would start crying before it began to cry.

H.S. became an ouroborosean that had lost her tail momentarily. She knew even in her sleep when her baby's mouth was looking for a tail to perfect the circuit. And the baby's want prompted the growth of the tails of both hers and the baby's to complete the separation and to perfect their ouroborosean beings.

g.

Dementia is visiting H.S. She has been taken off the treadmill. She no longer has to worry about securing her deepest privacy. It is there often. She wakes up and sleeps anytime, as her mind and body please.

Closing her eyes in the bright daylight, H.S. lets her mind wander.

The pleasure of raising the child was hers. Lucky mother. The child's ouroboros was terrific. In the early years, no internal-external division existed for the child. K.S. didn't have to close her eyes as H.S. did. K.S. talked, listened, laughed, and cried with the invisible. Eventually, K.S. learned the divide. School started, and then H.S. no longer saw K.S. interacting with the invisible. As K.S. got older, the fierce attacks on ouroboros by Disney, Pokémon, games, and whatnot took place. They wanted her ouroboros out of K.S.

H.S. had the honor of watching how K.S.'s ouroboros fought the battle, and how K.S.'s ouroboros charmed them in the end.

They wanted to make contributions to K.S.'s ouroborosean world!

H.S. was not aware of how much time had elapsed. She was lost in her thoughts.

It was K.S.'s voice from the next room that made H.S. realize that it was already time for her grandchildren to go to bed.

H.S. was happily listening to K.S. talking to her children.

k.

- Grandma's told you the story of how ouroroboros lost the tail?

- Did she tell you the tail was me? No?

- How about the tale of how grandma re-created her tail, and I grew up with a tail in my mouth? No?

- I still have one. You are missing out on a lot of ouroroborosean tales from grandma. Oh, yes, you both have them. Yes, your uncle has one, too.

h.

- White Fluff, I think was a hamster, but it doesn't matter. It was White Fluff. It treaded itself to death on a plastic wheel that grandma got for it.

- Grandma was about your age when it died. I was about your age when grandma told the story to me.

- We always turned off all the lights before she told the story, and then we felt the darkness together to see if it were appropriate for the White Fluff story. If it were, she would begin.

- Grandma was very good at making her voice tune in to the pulse of darkness.

j.

The darkness felt right for K.S. that evening, and the time felt ripe for the children.

q.

Every night, White Fluff is treading in the thick darkness. Alone in its deepest privacy. Absorbed. White Fluff is grinding its protruding middle. White Fluff is milling its flattened brain. The finely granulated powders are blowing into the air.

Confetti.

When the air is super dense with confetti, ouroboros seems to appear. But White Fluff gets off the wheel. Burnt out. Closes its eyes. Sleep takes over. Opens the eyes. Treading takes over.

K.S. enjoyed listening to her mother's voice within her own as she told it.

Close your eyes. I will conjure the sound of White Fluff treading on my pink wheel for you, grandma would say, so that you will see your ouroboros. Then she does the sound.

And, it worked for her grandchildren as it did for their mother. They were fast asleep with their ouroboros entertaining them. K.S. looked at the sleeping faces and prayed: May they grow up to appreciate their ouroborosean autonomy.

What K.S. did not know was that her mother fell asleep to it, too.

x.

On the other side of the wall, a woman in her mid-sixties was having a nightmare. She was swinging her limbs furiously and panting heavily; she was treading a pink wheel, milling herself to the bone, to catch a glimpse of her ouroboros. Her actions were very much in vain, though, because she could not see anything through the grey matter that surrounded her. It would not go away no matter how hard she milled to reproduce ouroboros. Grey matter just kept forming, denser and denser. When it reached zero visibility, she lost her sense of reality. Then she got excited: it was her birthday!

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