

Bilafond, the Call of the Ocean

Illustrations



A tale of transformation and hope for a new era: Golondrina, a water droplet born from the Bilafond glacier in the Himalayas, metamorphoses herself into a young woman in order to accomplish her mission on a suffering planet, through various meaningful encounters and epic adventures.

Jennie Buckle



1 - Nimah: the village

2

The many communities of the river bowed their heads in honour as they welcomed Golondrina into their watery world. As she travelled on, the algae growing on the rocks and riverbed were pulsating like Christmas tree lights, the fish were flapping their fins, and in the distance she could hear one of her favourite tunes—the welcoming sounds of a song that only whales, dolphins and elephants have ears for, and those of us who know how to mine the depths of silence for Earth’s whispers. Her fellow droplets knew that this was a rare moment in time. Not all of them had witnessed a Water Diamond as fiery as her. She radiated so brightly that they found it hard to keep their eyes on her, but nor could they look away. Her slender body was clothed in a diaphanous nebula of vibrating colours of the rainbow, accentuated by pearls that seemed to dart here, there and everywhere, but never straying far from her heart. Her wavy golden hair danced continuously as it flowed beyond her pointy tiptoes. Circulating around her head were more dazzling precious stones, as if orbiting their very own star. Her eyes were deep constantly changing pools of iridescent blues and greens. Her smile, well, children, all I can say is she had a smile that made all who gazed upon it let out a cry of joy. She truly was an awesome sight to behold. A new Era had arrived, and there could be no doubt about that.



2 - The metamorphosis of Golondrina

3

Somewhere out cruising the great North Atlantic Conveyor Belt Moby Dick, a beautiful Humpback whale, harkened to her call. Moby knew instantly who that was because the ocean told him so. He turned himself slowly through one hundred and eighty degrees and then headed off at a fast pace in her direction. Nobody travels faster through the world's oceans than a whale on a mission. At the spot in the vast ocean he was told she would be, he surfaced, and sure enough, just up ahead he spied her magical presence. He drew Golondrina gently in and down into his belly, and in a deep voice that reverberated through all of the North Atlantic Ocean he welcomed her aboard. In the belly of this great whale she found a pool of crystal clear fresh water illuminated by millions of dancing photons that added a bluish hue to her temporary home, and anything and everything she needed to make herself at home. But there was another surprise in store for her. She was over the moon, well not exactly, to find that she had the company of not one but two fellow Flow Ryders, and soon the three warriors were the best of friends and sharing stories of their wards.



*3 - Golondrina, Wendy & Pinocchio
in Moby Dick's belly*

4

ITupa sat down on his mat and placed it in front of him, and did not move until the morning light broke through his window. He kept his attention on the weak and flickering flame that regularly broke into a dance a whirling dervish would have been proud of, and then, for no reason he could think of, it would burn steady as a poplar tree on a windless day. Almost like it was waiting for him to joyfully clap his hands. With time he felt an affection rise up in his heart as if there was more to the flame than met the eye. It seemed to sense his sorrow and tried to cheer him up. By morning he knew that he had found a friend for life, something to meditate on that brought him a measure of comfort.



4 - ITupa in his cabin

5

“Take my hand and come outside with me,” she said, and led him out through the back door. They sat down on the three-legged wooden stools where many times they had talked or watched the sun rise above the high mountains. Neither spoke for quite a while, and soon they were joined by first one, then two, then three more Long-beaked Bush Warblers who settled in the apple tree at the top of the garden. Before long the apple tree was a-shimmer with fidgeting and tweeting little warblers. More than was usual, this springtime the tree was hard to see for being covered in a quilt of apple blossoms, and their scent wafted in waves over to where the siblings were sitting. Amber put her lips together and whistled a beautiful tune—not one that ITupa was familiar with but one he would never forget. In the next moment, all the little Gleefuls flew out of the apple tree and landed at their feet. Some even landed on their shoulders and heads. ITupa started to giggle, and then he laughed until he cried. His sister had always amazed him. He held out his hand and she placed her tiny hand in his. They sat like this for a long while. As quickly as the warblers had arrived, they flew off without a care for anyone, chirping away merrily as the cheeky posse lifted over the trees before swinging down low to the earth again and heading out towards the fields.



5 - ITupa and Amber in the patio

6

For the first time, there before his eyes, was Golondrina, his childhood friend from the ice castle but now rather more like the Lady of his Dreams. Her long golden hair drifted away from her in the river's flow. Her garment of bright white light held her in a dance of colours he had never seen before, and he couldn't help noticing the little pearls that darted this way and that, making sure he never got too close. And a crown of precious stones appeared to circumnavigate her head like sparkling planets. In one momentary glance her eyes told him that it was she who spoke to him when he slept, but he knew this already. ITupa wanted to get closer to Golondrina and pulled himself powerfully through the water. It was as if she was there but then not, a pulsating image that seemed to merge with the river and then appear in a different place before fragmenting once more into an infinite number of versions. She and he played a game of hide and seek for a while. He would catch her in the corner of his eye, first over one shoulder and then over the other.



6 - Golondrina meets ITupa for the first time

On they travelled, up a mountain and then down into a valley and once again up and over another mountain. After a while he found himself walking towards quite a small stream of fast flowing water. The thought crossed his mind that he may have reached the source of the Indus. Something seemed to be telling him so. In the distance up ahead stretched a large plain before him ringed by the high mountains, and he could also see the rays of the sun glinting off what must be a few lakes. He became aware of an immovable peace taking hold of his heart. As he scanned the horizon his attention was captured by an extraordinary mountain peak. He felt that he ought to know it, as if it was speaking to him like an old friend. It looked more symmetrical than any peak he had seen before and sat massively on the horizon. It was impossible to look away. Feeling somewhat overwhelmed he sat down with his dear friend, Flambé, standing by his side, and they did not talk for a very long while. Then ITupa let out the deepest of sighs as if something fundamental had slipped sideways inside his being. sideways inside his being.



7 - ITupa & Flambé at Mount Kailash

8

ITupa was relieved to see how quickly the boys started to relax. He could now see how this was all going to work out. Flambé was next to appear before the expectant audience of boys, and in a flash he popped out of the bag and landed in amongst the boys. He made his way to the front, and immediately started to twirl his cane above his head, putting the boys under a spell or rather, more like freezing them in a moment. Good for you, Flambé...job done, I say. And after a very long wait you are going to be bigger than any Broadway star could even imagine.

The excitement level rose to almost fever pitch as the children's eyes acclimatised to this strange little green man with a swirling and bobbing cornetto of orange hair. Who or rather what was this whirring and twirling dervish of an undersized little man? Flambé introduced himself with a flourish of his arms which sent a flame shooting up from his cornetto. The boys' attention, sitting in the shade of the Banyan tree, was now wholly concentrated on Flambé. With an elegant bow he invited them to make ready for a show the likes of which they had never seen before. Flambé, now the Ringmaster of the Show, then introduced the children to ITupa as the Sun that always shines its light on them, and Golondrina as the Moon that had their backs when times were dark. Then he tapped his cane twice on the trunk of the tree and broke into song, his twirl of orange hair glowing with excitement and his jacket tails flailing and flapping in time with his spindly arms. His routine that had long been prepared took off—he danced and sang:

*“...My soul is painted like the wings of the butterflies
Fairy tales of yesterday, grow but never die
I can fly, my friends
The show must go on The show must go on I'll face it with a grin
I'm never giving in
On with the show...”*



*8 - Golondrina, ITupa, Flambé & the children
under the Banyan Tree*