

My Own Little World

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Part one:

I stare out the window of my classroom as my teacher talks about the order of operations or natural selection or figurative language or something like that. I don't really know what subject we're currently on. I'm thinking of when I went to the carousel with my grandma this weekend. I spent hours riding on all the different wooden horses with their delicately carved saddles, manes and eyes. They were magical. If I close my eyes, I can almost see them galloping in through the window that I sit next to and coming in to take me away from this boring lesson. I gasp as I open my eyes. Just in my head, a herd of very real horses are galloping right at my classroom from outside. *Crash!* The window shatters as they all jump through to group around me. One kneels down in front of me. Unlike those on the carousel she sparkles like magic. The horse whinnies impatiently for me. I reach out my hand to stroke her soft mane...

From across the classroom, I hear someone snicker. I blink and the horses are gone. The only trace of them being there is my outstretched hand. "Care to join us, Jewel?" asks my teacher. "She's too busy stroking the air," says the boy that had laughed at me a second before. My face turns red. Of course. It was just another daydream. But this time it had seemed so real! I could almost still feel the warmth of the horse's neck on my hand. "Sorry." I say. As my teacher

continues talking I look at the window that the horses just broke. It's perfectly intact. I look at my teacher, but out of the corner of my eye I see the light hit the window just right. It shows an otherwise invisible line that traces all around the window in exactly the same outline of the hole that the horses made.

I love my route home from school. It's mostly on the side of the ocean but the end is through a short area of woods until I get to my neighbourhood. I love to imagine that there are mermaids in the ocean right next to me. The pier in my town is beautiful. Sometimes the sun glints on the water and I see colours. I like to think that those flashes of colour are mermaid tails flipping into the sea. As I walk along the pier, I imagine beautiful mermaids, smiling up at me from the clear waters. I look out at the docks and there they are. Mermaids! Just like how I imagined them. I stop to look. The first one has dark skin and her long hair is in thin braids. Her tail is shining shades of deep blue, rich purple and green. The second one has pale skin with shortish blonde hair, pulled back with a shell. Her top is made entirely of small shells tied together with kelp. Her tail is shining with bright shades of yellow, orange, pink and gold. The two mermaids are splashing around happily but they stop to wave at me. This time I won't be fooled. I pinch myself, rub my eyes, and shake my head, but the gorgeous mermaids are still there smiling at me. "Ok," I tell myself, "These are definitely real." I wave back and then watch the mermaids wave goodbye. Then they dive under the waves and swim away. Once their colourful tails have disappeared from view I turn to the man near me who's been scanning the ocean for

something. Maybe whales. “Did you see that?” I ask, wondering why he could look so bored. “See what?” he asks. Is he crazy? “The mermaids! The ones that were right there!” Now he looks at me like I’m crazy before softening to a smile. “You’ve got a good imagination kid.” Then he walks away. An imagination? That was real! I’m sure of it! I know I have a good imagination. I had just imagined the mermaids right before I saw them. But that was real! I finish my walk home in a huff. As I open the bright red door to my house I see my mom cooking in the kitchen. “Hi honey,” She says, “how was school?” “Good.” “Listen, we need to talk.” She says, turning away from her cooking to face me. “You need to focus more at school. Your teacher told me that you were in your own little world again today.” My own little world. She’s never used that term before. I kind of like to think about it. A world of all my different creatures that for some reason only I can see. My mom is still waiting for me to respond so I tell her “Sorry. I’ll try harder.” She takes that as an answer and we start making dinner together, laughing and chatting. When dad comes home she doesn’t mention anything about my bad focus. As I lie in bed that night, I look up through my skylight. I love my skylight. It’s one of my favourite activities to watch the stars as I fall asleep. And the forest next to my secluded street hides the light of the rest of town so that the stars are pretty bright. I imagine that there are fairies made from starlight and moonlight that come down to earth a night. In the day, they live in their castles in the stars. As I drift off to sleep I swear that I can see fairies with bright

clothes and hair and long glowing wings emerge from the starlight and moonlight and fly closer and closer to my skylight, and then I drift off to sleep.

Today everyone is talking about my “stroking air” incident. Word spreads fast at my school. I am sitting alone and reading, trying to avoid attention. “Hey Jewel!” Somebody yells. Ugh, it’s not even that funny. “How’s your pet air?” The kid asks and then bursts out laughing like it’s the most hilarious thing in the world. Other people join him. Ugh, this is so embarrassing! I wish that a dragon would just come and lift me up right now. Far away from all of this embarrassment. For a moment I actually get lost in my head, thinking about that dragon. That’s just how I am, I imagine something and then it starts to take place in my head like a picture and then I add more and more details until it’s almost real enough for me to touch. My brain latches on to the idea of the dragon and I start picturing it. It would be magenta and have silver eyes and spikes made of dark purple crystals on its back. Its wings would be long with golden veins lacing across them. I look up almost expecting the dragon to be there. Guess what? Swooping down from the cloudy, November sky, the dragon that I just pictured flies straight at me. I scream as it lifts me up in its sharp crystal talons. Blinded with terror, I thrash as hard as I can, still screaming like a banshee. It looks at me in confusion but gently drops me on the high cliff above our playground and flies away. I fall to the ground. My heart is pounding so hard, I think it’s going to burst right out of my chest. As I sit up I see a large group of students staring up at me. For some reason, nobody looks as if a dragon just flew into

the playground. A teacher walks over blowing her whistle. “Jewel! Get down from there this instant!” What? Didn’t anybody just see that? I carefully climb down to meet her. “What were you thinking, being up there?” She yells, “You know that the rocks are strictly off limits. Why did you go up there?” I look at her incredulously. Why did I go up there? Hello? THERE WAS A DRAGON!!!! “The dragon carried me up there!” I say, “Did you not see that?” She glares at me. “Young lady are you making fun of me?” She asks, “No!” I say, “One of the other kids must have seen it!” I expect someone to speak up but they’re all laughing. “Look,” Says the teacher, “I don’t know why you think I’m going to believe this story but you better tell me why you were up there or go right down to the principal’s office.”

“I was trying to, um...” I blurt out the first thing that comes to mind. “Find my imaginary friend.” Everyone around me (except for the scary teacher) bursts out laughing. I try to ignore it. The teacher stares at me for a second and then just shakes her head and walks away.

I walk home from school with thoughts swarming in my head. What’s going on? Why are these things appearing? Why can’t anyone else see them? You might think that I’m thinking I was going crazy but I actually do believe that these things are happening. Mostly anyways. There’s a little voice in the back of my head that’s wondering: *Is it really a coincidence that only I can see this? I have imagined all these things before I see them.* Maybe it is me, but how can I stop it? Maybe it’ll just keep getting worse and I’ll be stuck, alone in my own little world forever.

Part two:

It's been a week and I am so tired of this. Again and again I've been seeing things: a sea monster at the beach, a unicorn on the school field, fairies on the streets, and most of all, at least once a day is the magenta dragon with jewel like scales. There's been no more snatching, she just stares at me with her all-knowing eyes like she's trying to get me to understand something. I'm feeling pretty desperate as I stare out the window of my classroom and my teacher talks about mathematical transformations or something like that. I wrack my brain, trying to figure out a way to make these things go away, but as I see the magenta dragon perch on a tree in the playground I wonder if I've been thinking about this all wrong. Maybe it's not the magic that needs to leave my life; maybe it's the normal life that needs to make way for the magic. Come to think about it, I've always wished that some magical creature would come and take me away to a better life. Maybe this is my way out. As I began to understand all this, the dragon nods approvingly and I know that I've finally gotten the message that she's been trying to tell me. I stare that dragon right in the eye and mouth "I'm ready". I don't really know what these two words are about to do to my life but I'm ready to take the chance. I'm ready to spread my wings and soar away. The dragon flies in through the window and bends down next to my desk. My heart is pounding and I'm having some second thoughts but I take a deep breath and climb on her smooth back. To my sudden amazement, the dragon starts to speak. "Jewel, I'm here to take you to your world." She says in a velvety voice. "Your imagination power is so strong that

your creations are becoming real. You have a place in the nearby mountains for you to live with all that you have made. You belong there. Are you ready to go?” Have you ever been faced with the decision to leave everything behind for something better? It’s the craziest thing. I don’t want to leave this world but I know that something better awaits me. I swallow and nod, ready for what my future will bring and then me and my dragon fly away to my own little world.

The End