

Daydreaming

A short story by Gigi Sedlmayer

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When Amos had gone, Matica looked toward the hut, wondering if her mum would call her for dinner, it was already quite late, with flying twice and then Amos visiting again. As the front door was open, she could hear her mum busy doing something in the kitchen. Her dad hadn't yet come back from tutoring the Indians either. So, she decided to stay sitting on the bench until her mum called her. Staring past the big tree into the sky she was aware of the pearly white moon, not quite full yet, but very big as it struggled hard to penetrate the light blue sky. Hearing a slight whistling of a hummingbird, her eyes wandered to find it. But not finding it, she let her eyes wander back to the moon, dreaming away. Sitting relaxed on the bench, Matica's eyelids became heavy and slowly closed. She saw two figures, looking like the poachers, filling her mind. In the next few seconds, she experienced the anguish she felt when they had the fight with them, the fright she felt, that they would get Talon and kill him, the extraordinary fight between the Indians and her family against the poachers. They with taking a boy hostage, then Emelio, then her Mum. However, Tamo and Tima flew directly at them, risking their lives, while the poachers pointed their guns at them, the birds knocked them down and stood on their bodies to hold them down. The Indians then could tie them up. Then her anger toward the poachers as they escorted them into the hall, her speech to the poachers about how they have no right to capture Talon or even kill him since she raised him, fed him, taught him how to fly and nurtured him to become the mighty condor he is now. A light grin played around her mouth, but her thoughts went on. It was their fault I had to raise him and not Tamo and Tima. They would have probably sold him to a zoo anyway. And then she smiled again, remembering Tamo and Tima guarding the poachers in the hall until the police came to take them away. Her mind was filled with these thoughts, all scrambled together in one short picture, and knew she would never forget those two amazing but frightful days. She laughed and opened her eyes, thinking, What a sight it was, with Tamo and Tima watching them until the police came to take them away, and the Indians tying them to chairs in the community hall. It was brilliant. And all went well. They are now safely in prison, where they belong. Then the realisation hit her and she sat up, her thoughts still wandering. It's all over now. No more 'you know who'. No more poachers. I even can think and say that word again. They are gone, forever. A big sigh escaped her trembling mouth but then, when she breathed out, she grinned mischievously and said out loud, 'Poachers.' Still grinning mischievously, her thoughts travelled to Talon. She closed her eyes, letting herself drift, and imagined Talon. She felt herself lying on his back, feeling his soft feathers under her cheek, flying high up over the Andean mountain, then leaving them behind. Talon flew on. It seemed to her as if he was flying toward the pearly, misty white moon. It was eerie for her to see the moon becoming bigger and bigger. It looked white and big, with black lines crossing over its surface. And yes, she saw the face in the moon, as she heard many times from the Indians. She also saw the craters from the impact of all the meteorites that had bombarded the moon. Where are we going? she thought. What is Talon doing? Why is he flying to the moon and so incredibly fast? The moon became bigger and it stood huge and vast in front of her. But we can't fly out to the moon? Can we? She saw Talon's face right in front of her. He turned his head and looked at her, grinning mysteriously, then tilting his head and looking at her with

big eyes, he blinked and opened his beak, as if to show his teeth – as if he had any – or as if he would start talking to her. His tongue fell out to the side of his mouth, like a dog. He nodded then he said in his grunt, You will see. She stared at the milky white moon as it hung there, filling her whole vision. Wondering, she let herself be carried away, safe on Talon's back. When they were really close, so close she thought Talon's beak would touch it or she could touch it with outstretched hand, a fracture appeared in the moon's crust. She followed the fracture with her eyes as it wandered slowly over the surface of the moon. Talon looked back at her and grunted. 'Why Talon? What is it? Why is the moon cracking up? It can't be.' Looking back at the moon, she noticed the fracture was spreading over the whole surface of the moon crust and becoming wider. She could hear the cracks happening and flinched. Even Talon flinched, flapping his wings forward to slow himself down, to stop flying any closer. He hovered in front of the moon, watched as the cracks widened, zigzagging and snaking over the moon crust. Will the moon explode? Will the pieces hit us? Talon should fly further away, Matica thought. What are we doing here anyway? What is the moon doing? Not good. Suspended in the air, Matica watched and wondered what would happen. 'Talon, you knew something like that would happen with the moon and you wanted me to see it, to experience and witness it. But you wanted to see it for yourself, right?' Talon nodded briefly and grunted. Another crack followed and another, crisscrossing the moon crust. The moon looked as if it was being held together with threads of black, thick yarn. Nearly all the milky white colour of the moon was gone. The cracks kept widening and big black holes appeared where the crust fell away. It didn't explode. Matica was glad they were hovering a long way away. The moon crust, where it fell away, soared up and out in all directions. Some pieces found the way in their direction. They ducked away. One piece sailed close by as Talon and Matica followed it anxiously, ready to fly off. They looked back at the moon, and suddenly, the pieces that were left exploded in all directions. For a short time, it looked like a great firework exploding. But in the next second, they all disintegrated into the troposphere. One big piece flew directly at them. Talon ducked away out of its trajectory as Matica bent to the side to even his balance. The piece, rotating over itself, soared past over their heads with a singing sound, disappeared into space. Then the moon cracked open, split in half with an incredible force. Matica jerked on Talon's back and screamed out: 'That can't be. Talon, fly away. Disaster will follow. One of the pieces will hit us. Go! Fly! The moon has exploded.' Talon shook his head and stayed where he was, fascinated and staring at the event in front of him. He wouldn't let that show pass him by. Nor Matica, who was glued to the spot, staring at the event unfolding in front of them. Watching the transformation of the moon, the excitement grew in both of them. 'What is happening now?' Matica said in wonder and excitement. The moon did explode. Why did it explode? Was something inside that caused the explosion? Will something come out of it? Talon hovered and grunted. He also forgot to flap his wings. But he stayed with Matica, not wavering, as if the universe was holding them steady on the spot, so they could watch. By now the moon was gone, with all its craters. Instead, a huge, fluffy, white ball hovered where the moon had been. 'What is that?' Matica asked intrigued. Talon grunted. But then the white fluffy ball was falling, falling, falling until... Matica gasped, her mouth fell open, not believing what was unfolding in front of them. Then she yelled out, 'Wooooowhhhh!' Talon grunted a strange, surprised grunt as well. It was like Matica's, an elongated Wooooowhhhh! The white ball had unfolded vast, white, feathery wings. 'Wow, look at that. They were rolled up into its body, now it rolls them out, whatever it is,' Matica said, astonished. 'Look, they're still going out, stretching into the universe. Wow. It looks as if they never end.' Talon hovered further away, since it looked as if the end-fingers of its wings would touch them. 'Like your wings, Talon.' Talon grunted his own excitement. Next, a long neck and a head appeared out of the white ball, with a long,

but thin beak. It opened its beak and screeched, endlessly. 'Talon, do you hear that?' Talon nodded. 'It said, I am finally free, I can soar. I can fly wherever I want to fly. I am free.' Again and again the huge white bird screeched as it started to flap its wings. Talon and Matica were stunned. They hovered and watched the huge bird disappearing as it slowly stretched its wings and flew away. She screamed out, 'Wow, what an amazing, beautiful huge bird.'