

5

That it were a dreaming

'Who will believe our story and to whom is the truth revealed? Behold, the anointed child grows like a tender shoot.'

From the ancient wisdoms

Will I live your lie all my days?

Why will you not believe my truth? Is it the colour of my skin? Is it the sound of my voice?

But I have a dreaming. And this you will believe. It is a legend of the family that once was, of the mother that loves a child, of the squatters who stole the mother's life and now live there in her place.

ϕε

There was a girl born by her traditional name Mariyala Wilca-wilca, Princess of the Quiet Sea.

Her father was the headland and her mother was the beach.

Mariyala grew up with her father never speaking to her, never showing love.

Her mother was warm and smiling, and she knew that Mariyala longed to dance.

One day Mariyala met the breeze and he asked her, "Are you free, as I am free?"

That it were a dreaming

“I don’t know what free is,” replied Mariyala, “but I do long to dance.”

“To dance is to be free,” said the breeze.

And so they danced, Mariyala and the breeze, and the sound of their laughter reached the ears of her father. But he said nothing.

Her mother also said nothing – but she watched her daughter and smiled with Mariyala as she enjoyed the breeze’s delights.

And in their dance Mariyala came to carry his child. “We shall name her Becca,” said the breeze secretly to Mariyala, “for Becca means ‘loops in a rope.’ She shall form a bond between the land, the sea and the air.” And Mariyala agreed, vowing to marry the breeze.

When her father came to know that Mariyala was carrying the child of the breeze, he was greatly angered. He broke his silence with a thunder, and spoke at last to Mariyala, saying, “You shall not marry the breeze, for he is not one of us. He is different.

And you shall not cast your eye on his child that you carry, for it is the child of the very darkness.”

Then he threw huge rocks down at Mariyala so that she retreated some way into the land and her mother formed a barrier to protect her daughter.

In the evening the breeze came to dance again with Mariyala but he could not find her.

Instead he found her mother who warned him, “By your very life you shall never return here, for Mariyala’s father, my husband, seeks to kill you for this thing that you have done.”

“I must come here,” said the breeze, “for I love Mariyala more than my life.”

“My husband will kill you if he sees you with Mariyala,” insisted the mother. “You must go from here.”

But it was too late. Mariyala’s father heard the voice of the breeze and thundered at him, hurling rocks at the breeze, but the breeze escaped between the trees.

From there, he called to Mariyala in words that heightened the spirit essence within her.

She caught his words and answered in a whisper.

Every night for three months the breeze would come to the trees and sing his love to Mariyala. She would kiss the air at the sound of his voice, but she could never escape to him. She remained trapped between her mother's protection and her father's anger.

And so the day came when she would give birth to Becca, a golden swan.

'Can a woman forget the fruit of her womb, or the child that suckled at her breast? Likewise, I will never forget you. Look – I have engraved your name on the palm of my hand.'

From the ancient wisdoms

For eighteen days and eighteen nights Mariyala tended to Becca, loving her and providing for her.

For eighteen days and eighteen nights the breeze would come and wrap himself around Becca, caressing and protecting her.

And the three grew in their union, so that Mariyala's mother became jealous and told her husband what had happened.

So the headland called to the-land-beyond-the-great-divide to come in the evening and swallow the child. "Follow the breeze," he said, "and he will lead you to it."

The very next night the-land-beyond-the-great-divide flew on the back of the breeze and overcame him. The-land-beyond-the-great-divide pushed back the waters of Mariyala and scooped up the child, carrying her away. The-land-beyond-the-great-divide did not swallow the child, but shackled Becca into the yoke of a working beast, placing on her back burdens for which a golden swan was never created.

And the years and the dust of the-land-beyond-the-great-divide covered Becca, so that she no longer saw

That it were a dreaming

herself dressed in golden down, but only in browns and blacks and greys.

This is why some tell the legend of Aj'r-berri, the emu with hidden feathers of gold.

And this is why the breeze howls through the trees at night calling for his love, and why he roams the-land-beyond-the-great-divide looking for his daughter. And this is why, when the beach releases Mariyala back into the sea, her soul remains lifeless in the brackish lagoon while her spirit essence is lost in the ocean.

And this is why, when the breeze once again dances with the sea, the spirit essence of Mariyala is enraged against the headland.

And this is why to this day, the headland still hurls rocks at the sea, and why the breeze still wrestles with the sands of the beach – for there is no bond between the land the sea and the air. It has been stolen to the-land-beyond-the-great-divide.

ϕε

'It shall be restored to you, the years that the locust has eaten. You shall be lifted up, given hope and you shall prosper, for I will bring you home from the land where you were sent.'

From the ancient wisdoms

So can you believe my truth?

Or will you forever be distracted by the colour of my skin and the sound of my voice?

Shall Becca ever know the dreaming the breeze has for her?

Oh that it were a mere dreaming.

Oh that it were.