Belle

Fantasia

The Impressions of an Aspiring Voyager
The room looked like total emptiness. The lamp illuminated through the shades of black and blue, accentuating a Stygian oblivion. The clock monotonously ticked as the books on the desk remained still. The bed was untouched. The wardrobe stood without a mark. And then, the shadow of a young man came into the room. Feeling dull, unimaginative, wanting to isolate himself from reality, he touched his bed, staring at the wardrobe, sighing as the moonlight was gleaming from his only window.

After a few minutes of silence, he opened his window, and climbed the drainpipe up to the roof overlooking the mediocrity of a Seattle neighborhood. Staring at the moon, envying its shining light, slowly sat on the beam, thinking pensively. He thought of his existence, questioning his purpose in life, and why the world never gave him a chance.

In his twenty-three years of life, Vince Fiedler did not see his purpose. The future was obscure for him. As a man who recently graduated from college, it was hard for him to follow his true ambitions. All he could do was sit on the roof, trying to find the answers to why his friends were never there, why he was never able to woo a woman, and why even with his good grades his proficiencies never seemed to boost his self-esteem. Unfortunately, the answers were never there, and he labeled himself a persona non grata.

After thirty minutes of himself glimmering in the full moonlight, he climbed down through his bedroom window and sat on his bed, confounded at his misfortunes. He kept thinking to himself, *Is the dream possible?*

An hour had passed before he decided it would be better to ponder tomorrow. It was roughly one in the morning, and the night did not anticipate him to conjure up an answer at such time. So he brushed his teeth, and tried not to think deeply about it.

The next morning, Vince rose from his bed, looking at the ceiling, feeling restless. The dream did not come. An answer was still sought. He did not feel motivated to get up, but he needed to use his time wisely to walk and think. He showered, got dressed into his treasured black raincoat that his mother gave him on his thirteenth birthday,
and decided to go for a walk on a blustery, rainy day. It seemed a perfect time to do so, as the rain would give him a sense of enlightenment.

He left his house, which was situated on North Meridian Avenue, in the Pinehurst area of North Seattle. He staggered a little, still somewhat glazed from the absence of sleep last night. He still paid attention to the sidewalks, however, ambling lightly along the curbs, minding his own business on the cool jazz of his MP3 player.

Passing two saxophone players on the intersection of North 122nd Street and Meridian, he decided to stop in front of the local coffee house, deciding whether or not a small mocha and a prune Danish would stimulate his creativity. He stealthily sneaked into his wallet to see if he had a few dollars to cover brunch. While putting his wallet back, he stood stiffly like a statue, totally unconscious of his surroundings. He suddenly envisioned a beautiful, serene-looking sunset, the water painted lavender as seagulls flew over an idyllic beach landscape. Vince could not believe what he was seeing. He thought he had suddenly teleported to some supernatural dimension via a magic portal.

He thought to himself, Wow. He was itching to run for the beach and lie down with his head towards the crimson-filled sky. It seemed like the most relaxing thing to do at the time. He ran for the beach, unaware of his surroundings in the real world. As he approached the beach, he avoided getting hit by a Subaru and a Chevrolet while doing so. He was unaware of the screams from passersby. He simply took off for the ocean, carefree, dazed.

Before long, Vince was snapped out of his trance by a friendly police officer who managed to catch him before he became roadkill. People were relieved that Vince regained his consciousness, and some were still wondering what all the commotion was about.

Amid murmurs, the officer approached Vince, sighed with relief, and said, “You need to be careful there, son. You could’ve been run over, or worse trip and fall down a hill. You’re lucky you’re not in San Francisco.”

He then brushed the dirt off Vince, and finished, “You should go home now, Mr. Fiedler. Get some rest. Control yourself.”
Vince took the officer’s advice and walked home so he could record the hallucination in his notebook. His curiosity piqued; he never saw anything so surreal. He could always wonder if his mind was madly wandering, but he knew it was much more than that. He was never into drugs, only touching and sniffing out toadstools in the summertime which made him gag and run like he was attacked by a swarm of bees.

Vince’s mother asked him when he came home, “How was the trip?”

Still looking glazed and curious, Vince replied with a little white lie, “It was interesting.”

Vince’s mother still looked at him, worried that he may be getting sick. She wanted the best for her son. She did not want him to stare at the shadows on the walls of his own room.

She knew something was wrong, and she suddenly gave Vince a tap on the shoulder, “I know something’s wrong, sweetie,” said his mother. “I know you haven’t slept. I see it clearly. What’s troubling you?”

“It’s—nothing, mom,” replied Vince. After a short pause, “All right, it is something. I—haven’t slept all night, and I am getting hallucinations out of random.”

She sighed. “I knew it.”

Vince continued, “The officer stopped me from getting hit by a car at the last second, while—you should have seen this, mom: picturesque sunsets, a big beach, a little spa just a few feet away from the shore…”

She interrupted him. “Oh god, honey.” She quickly hugged him tightly, “Don’t frighten me like that. You know I constantly worry about your welfare. Everything that happened since college. You have been sleeping less, concentrating more on finding some ‘dream.’ I’m not trying to be premonitory, but you have to be careful from now on. Your dreams are going to become meaningless if you become danger-prone.”

Vince tried to take heed of his mother’s sage advice. He walked back to his room, staring at the few seagulls that flew towards the sound. He still wondered what he just observed some minutes back. It was idyllic: far from reality, yet appeared real. It was extraordinary, not something Vince would normally envision.
That night, he tried to urge himself to go back to the coffee shop again to see if he can jump his mind back into the vision. The persuasion almost worked, but he thought it safe to stay home, just so he did not run into any more trouble. While staring at the night sky, he noticed the azure of the sky tint back to an orange, red, vermilion color, and before long, the tranquil sounds of the waves soon reached his ear. Vince felt anxious; worried he would fall out of his window as he followed the seagulls towards the shore. But he did not feel any pain. He was relieved at the seemingly real ambiance. He felt like taking off his clothes and going for a swim, but realized that was too ideal.

Vince stared at the beautiful vermilion sky, leaving his troubles behind, as the seagulls loomed over him. But just when he was virtually drenched in its idyllic aura, he heard the footsteps of someone walking by. It was someone he did not expect to encounter, especially in a fantasy. It was a girl, wearing a white sun hat. But this was not any girl Vince had seen in the material world. She had beautiful, straight, blonde hair, wrapped around her head like comet’s hair, dressed in blue, with a Parisian princess necklace, humming an eerie tune, minding her own business. As she passed Vince, she opened her eyes towards him, gave him a smile, giggled, and walked on.

Vince’s eyes stood still in a stun, keeping his attention to the girl. Never did he see such a sight. He was intoxicated by her fantastic beauty. He looked for whatever flower was nearby so he could acknowledge her with such courtesy.

There were a few tulips by the seaside. He eagerly plucked two or three from the patch and skipped along the path towards the mansion, where she was, painting on a canvas, humming the same eerie song. He snuck up behind her, and knowing his presence, the girl immediately asked him, “What do you think? Do you appreciate my art?”

The painting displayed the beach with impressionist undertones of vivid colorations. Vince stood stunned for a moment, raising his eyebrows in agreement.

“Sure. I’m no art critic, but it’s...”

“Good. Thought it would be,” she interrupted.
Vince showed her the tulips. “I—,” he cleared his throat. “I brought you these flowers. Your art is, um, magnifique. The work of a distinguished artist.”

She smiled, “I express my gratitude.” She slowly took the tulips from Vince. “It’s nice of you, Vince.”

He felt aghast. “You know my…”

“I’m Belle Fantasia.”

“How do you do, Miss Fantasia. I am not sure how you know my name, but I surmise that there is more to you than what my mind is throwing at me.”

She then frowned. “But I am your mind.”

He replied, “Well, then, let you wander with me and let’s forever paint, swim beyond the horizons, sail the salty brine, and feel free.”

She escaped her insecurity and replied, “Why, Vince, your poetic articulation woos me.”

“Well, I read a few Shelley and Poe in school, but I don’t think I have a rather expansive vocabulary,” he modestly admitted.

She chuckled. “Well, even if it’s just a little, you seem confident and worthy enough to be my man,” as she teasingly pinched his cheek.

He returned with a chuckle of infatuation. This is probably one of the first instances in a while where Vince smiled greatly.

“Well, now that’s all settled, let’s sit on the beach together.”

“By my shoulder?” she asked.

“After you, Madame,” he said in his bad butler impression.

Vince and Belle both ambled towards the beach. Vince was still unaware he was still in a fantasy, but he did not care. As long as he was somewhere happy, he did not want to escape that bliss.

Vince carelessly jumped into the water with his clothes on. Belle chuckled from behind, “Oh silly, I guess if you want to swim in your shirt, I’ll swim with my dress.”

Vince shrugged as he tittered, “Why not, it’s not as if our parents are going to catch us without our swimwear.”
They both basked in the ocean waves for a half hour, enjoying each other’s smiles under the vivid sunset. Vince was caught in his own paradise. He did not want to let go of what he thought were his sudden destinies; he wanted to let his imagination run wild continuously without interruption.

Vince pointed his finger towards the sunset. “Have you seen anything as picturesque as this?” asked Vince, relaxed as his head rested on the water.

“It’s always like this. I think it’s divine,” replied Belle.

“Yeah, I don’t think I could ever get tired of this. It’s something you can write—a poem about.”

Belle smiled. “You can write poetry about anything, even me. Surprise me.”

Vince thought for a few seconds until he exclaimed, “You know, I think I can. You can give me confidence to use my creativity.”

Belle again smiled. “You don’t need confidence. Just by looking at you, you have a heart of talent.” Belle turned towards the sunset, “See the sunset? That sunset is endless. Full of imagination. You just have to look carefully, seek out imagination, and chase it. It’s possible something good can happen. Because you’re capable of such a feat, as do I.”

Vince took a second or two to let it sink in and then he nodded. “Will we see each other again?” he then asked.

“We always will. It was good spending time with you,” she replied. She then added, “As long as you promise to love me, I will always love you. Now let the sunset guide you.”

Vince nodded in acceptance and looked towards the sun. In just another moment, the sun turned into the moon. Vince was back up on the roof of his house, overlooking the Seattle skyline. He stared blankly at the moon, thinking pensively. He felt a little upset that everything was a mirage, but he understood what Belle was telling him, and he promised to follow her word. He looked forward towards the clear blue sky, finally realizing that he found the dream.