

Dancing Doves

I was a dove. I wasn't one of those pristine white doves people usually think of. I was just a common grey, plump-bodied specimen. I had a family as well. Three plain, winged creatures I called my children. My eldest, as brave as a lion but so proud and arrogant. His brother, so reckless and hot-headed. My youngest, as timid as a mouse. Smart but her irrational fear of all things alive invalidated her intelligence.

It was a fine day to scour for food. Above canopies of trees, we flew, keeping an eye out for berries or grains we could devour. I enjoyed flying. The feeling of the wind flowing between my feathers, caressing my body while keeping me afloat, is simply blissful. It's enchanting.

After some time of weaving between branches, we headed towards a stout tree to rest our wings. Just as I perched on a protruding branch, I spotted some nuts scattered in a small clearing. I curiously approached the clearing and chirped a little tune to signal my family on my find. They fluttered to where I was to gorge on their meal. How stupidly careless of me to not be suspicious.

We were too distracted to notice the net flung towards us. By the time we were alert, it was already too late. The net had already engulfed us. A hunter, beaming with pride, emerged from a set of foliage nearby. As he stomped towards us, I knew we had to act fast.

The net was too heavy to push aside by myself but it was light enough that if we worked together, we could nudge it off us. I tried to let them know but in their panicked state, my chirps fell on deaf ears. The hunter was already stood before us and he held the net down. It was too late.

The reaper pulled a club from behind him and I instantly knew what was coming. Realisation first dawned on my eldest. He began to frantically flail his wings in panic, as if he was dancing, in an attempt to escape. The hunter brought his club down swiftly, ending the dove's movements.

I looked towards my second offspring. Fear flashed in his beady eyes. He started to dance in a frenzy, not realising his mistake. Another blow was dealt and he fell. My youngest was frozen with dread. She knew what was coming.

The hunter's eyes were focused on me and his club was already raised so I knew I was next. As the bludgeon swung down, I glanced around. My panic-stricken daughter was staring straight at me, surrounded by blades of grass which were painted red. What a terrible way to perish.

I wondered if things could've turned out differently if we worked together. If we had a moment sooner to think about what actions we could've taken. If we moved as a unity. But it was too late. The back of my head electrified with pain as my world went dark.

(500 words)