

“In Flight”

by

Holly Hansen

My loose morning clothes whip around my limbs with violent feather fingers, showing the sun the unfamiliar skin of my torso. The sky is blue beneath a whitish, dusty film and the spring winds carry leaves and petals ripped from early-blooming trees. Dirt is embedded into my skin with each surge. Strands of hair become rivulets in the wind and all I can do is smile. None of this will matter soon.

I leap on the trampoline and feel the wind carving into me, pushing me in any direction. I close my eyes and press my feet as hard as I can on the black surface each time I fall. And when I'm at level with the trees, I pretend I'm flying. Hair in a stream behind my back, arms extended, toes pointed, and I'm flying. Above my home, above the airplanes, above everything and everyone and I'm gone. I'm flying through a dusty veil. I'm in complete and utter solitude, hovering in a bright in-between.

They'll list me as Missing in Action when I'm gone. I've been fighting in the war of this labyrinth, wandering these halls, wondering when it will end. And now I'm out, floating above my home, above the airplanes, above everything and everyone. Mystification becomes clarification—everything is as clear as river water. Soft music carried with the wind, carrying me, carrying us all. All the problems in the world gone with the wind.

It hurts when my feet touch the ground.