

The Ice Skater in the Snow Globe

A Mind Wander by Lisa Hering

July 22, 2019

With Music by Peder B. Helland at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hlWiI4xVXKY>

I glide. I am sailing across the ice, gracefully. It's cold and snow is falling. I can see the snowflakes. They fall upon my cheeks and melt. I close my eyes and skate without thinking. My body knows what to do. The metal blades make a streak across the face of the ice. I turn and now skate backward, with ease I move and turn like I knew nothing else. Forward, backward, forward, backward. The wind caresses my face. I hear the sound of the skates on the ice, slicing the frozen water. I'm clothed in a white silk dress with a long veil, and the fabric swirls around me as I spin. Then, one leg high in the air, trailing behind me with the sun glistening on the blade. I go open eagle into a spin, and my arms form a cradle around my belly, keeping it safe and warm, keeping something safe and warm, someone who could have been.

My spin slows, and I pause slightly before I head into a long stride with my arms held wide and open stretched out, allowing spirits to greet me and to fly freely around me as I continue my path upon the frozen lake.

The trees are barren of leaves, with only frost covering their branches. They appear white against a bright and happy blue sky. The frosty ice crystals glisten as I pass like the facets of a diamond. I feel a flake of snow on my cheek which drizzles like a tear against the warmth of my skin. Then I see more flakes falling, swirling all around me in a circle. I look at the sky, and the sky is a crystal ball. I am in a glass ball of water and snow, a child's toy, and the child is looking intently inside at the miracle of her snow globe whose figure inside is a real person. The child peering in is a young girl, five or six, and she watches in wonder. She smiles and her white teeth appear like the snow on my ground. Her eyes are bright blue, coloring the sky in my world. Her cheeks are pink and make my dawn and

dusk. And her hair is a white blond in bouncy ringlets that dance like the falling snow. A hairband made of red velvet causes a red rainbow in my sky. To me, it is a red carpet to heaven.

As the snowfall slows, the young girl shakes the crystal ball again, and turns it upside down, and my world is turned upside down too. The snow begins to fall again, more feverishly. And I spin on my skates, faster and faster, with my arms held straight up to the sky. Then I bring them out sideways, reaching, reaching for something near me, but it only the distance that is next to me, and my spin slows and comes to a stop. I hear the skates on the ice as they grind to a halt. And I am still and have time to think. And I am remorseful at my loss. But life goes on. And I bow down to the Earth and glide on one foot, the other lifted behind me, and my arms crossed over my heart.

Soon, a bird's shadow appears on the ice besides me. It grows larger. I look up and see a black raven soaring above. His wingspan covers my arms which are now stretched out behind me like angel wings. He turns and I turn. He circles and I circle. We are silent partners in a snowy dance. I skate in a figure eight, he copies. I spin, he dives. I rest, he catches a thermal and rises. There are other birds in the trees, and they talk and sing from their perches. They are our audience. The young girl laughs in pleasure. Her father, the love of her life, approaches and looks in on us with her.

“Daddy, they are real!” says the child.

“Are they?” he asks. “Well now, let's take a closer look.” And he peers ever closer. “Well, isn't that something?” smiles father. “They really are real.” He looks at his daughter, to him an angel, smiles and gives her a kiss on the forehead. “Take good care of that,” he tells her. “Wish upon a star and maybe she'll come to life in our world.”

As night begins to fall, she crawls into her white feather bed. She holds the snow globe tight and sets it on her white down filled pillow next to her where she can keep it near. Night time comes to all of us. She closes her eyes and I skate on into the night. The wind is blowing and my raven partner has taken off to his own family. I am dancing alone in the light of the moon.

And then she appears. She steps tenderly onto the ice from the far end. I cannot see her well. But she has light hair, blue eyes and red cheeks. And she is smiling. She wears a white down hat and a white feather coat which is long and trailing on the ice behind her.

As she moves toward me, her pace is hindered by her clothing. I have stopped skating to watch her, my child. When she sees my eyes on her, she recognizes me and she tries to hurry but can't. And so her tiny hands reach up to undo the buttons. The coat slips off to reveal a red velvet dress, now much lighter of weight. She pushes the hat off her head and it falls to the ice revealing a red hair band and white gold hair. I lean forward and push off from the ice, raising my arms out beside me and head toward her. She does the same. She wobbles a bit, and then becomes steady. The moon shines a gray light on us. The snow has stopped for the moment. She is sailing toward me. As we approach one another, we pass and then turn in unison. We skate in a circle and she laughs in delight. I reach for her hands and take hold of her. We circle ever faster, and I gradually lift her off the ice so she is flying around me as I hold her hands tight. And I spin her around me and she is happy. We spin again and again until we are tired. It is quiet except for the sound of the breeze and the skates raking across the ice kicking up white shavings.

Soon, we hear the birds chirping in the dawn. Nautical twilight approaches. The young girl draws in a quick breath and her eyes show surprise at how quickly time has passed. She smiles at me, then turns and skates off to the far edge of the lake from whence she had come. She walks through the snow until I can no longer see her.

The morning sun rises and lights my world. The birds are loud and talkative. She presses her nose to the glass from the outside and says in a whisper,

“I forgot my coat and hat!”

I turn and see them still laying on the icy surface.

“Keep them warm for me,” she says, as she lazily lays back in the bed, uncovered and without a pillow.

I skate over to the coat and hat and reach down. They are still warm. I put them on and they feel soft. She shakes the globe and the snow begins. I hold my arms out beside me and push off again. With one foot stretched out behind me, I sail in circles and figure eights, sometimes forward and sometimes backward. I bring my leg down and my arms cross in front of me as I bring them back up in the shape of a Gothic arch from and ancient cathedral, and then out to the side. I glide facing forward with both feet on the ground and then bend one knee as I lean and turn into a curve and then into a spin. And I

spin and spin, with my dark hair in a pony tail rotating around me, faster and faster. And I keep on spinning. And my form becomes fuzzy and blurry as I spin ever so much faster.

And I walk into the girl's bedroom and see that she is without cover. And I cover the girl in her blanket and kiss her on the cheek.

"Mommy, the ice skater is real!" the child says.

"Is she?" I ask. "Well now, let's take a closer look."

She holds the snow globe up to the light. Inside is an ice skater spinning. She's wearing a feather coat and hat. As the skater comes to rest, she takes off the coat and reveals a red dress. She then throws off the hat, and I see her hair is blonde and in it, a red hair band. She continues to sail gracefully across the ice and perform moves of ice dancing. I set the globe down on the table. I am in the bed now with the man, the father. He smiles and kisses me on the forehead.

"You really like that snow globe, don't you, darling?"

"Yes, I do." I reply. "Someday, we'll have a girl just like that." And I stretch my arms as I yawn and give the globe a slight shake. It just started snowing outside and I stare out the window. It's a beautiful morning and a snow covered bird sits on a branch nearby. She is content to occupy the branch and sing for a while. Then she shakes off the whiteness from her head and back and reveals red velvet feathers with a golden crown. She flies through the air making circles and figure eights. I press my nose to the window and watch. The snow continues to come down. The window fogs with my breath and the snowflakes that land on the window quickly turn into drops of water that run down the glass. I get a glimpse of a black raven, and the two vanish in the distance. I rest my forehead on the cold glass and close my eyes. In my mind, I am dancing with the bird. And we sing and play together in the air and the snow. We are two angels together in space time. And there is only a blur in the snow globe where nothing but a snow flurry can be seen.