

Glimmer

By Jenny Butler

Enclosed in the warm fluid, I listened to the gurgling of her body and to the noises outside, the resonance that reaches me in here. In comfortable calm, sucking my thumb, I imagined the source of those external sounds. I drifted to sleep and dreamed of black swirls and amorphous figures, reflections of my waking imaginings of what I could hear. It was a strange feeling then, a sudden shuddering downward and a detachment. This was my first – and last – experience of touch. I was falling through the flesh, the red liquid all around. I looked through a film of red, until my world turned black.

I found myself in the cold, black expanse, so much darker than before. There was no sound, just emptiness and nothing touching. I felt lonely and so sad. I remained in the stillness, for what seemed like an endless time: a tiny self, in desolation.

Then, I could see something approaching. My emotions surged – It was almost too much to feel at once! A sparkle was moving, and another, and more approaching and they formed a line in front of me. I felt exhilarated! They stayed in formation for a few moments and then began to move away, on into the void. Why were they leaving me? I wanted to reach out, to touch them somehow. I wanted so desperately for them to return! They had moved further away, now tiny glints. They bobbed up and down and glimmered brighter, as if beckoning me to follow. I lunged forward and, to my astonishment I was a sparkle too! I could feel myself flickering and was aware of emitting light.

I followed them along until the absolute blackness gave way to a dark cloud. We passed through this haze and entered a room. I saw her then – my mother! She was in bed and it was nighttime, but no way as dark as from where I had emerged. I found that by thinking of moving, I could indeed move. I floated toward her bed and I went close to shine into her eyes. I wanted her to wake up. It was so strange to see her face, to not be on the inside, to not be a part of her! She opened her eyes and looked at me. I moved as fast as I could, up and down, over and back. Would she know it was me? She had tears in her eyes as they followed my radiance, but then she smiled. She *knew*! She knew it was me! I swirled in the air, making a spiral of light. The other sparkles were moving chaotically, trying to get my attention, anxious to be off. I didn't want them to leave me behind! I followed them out the open window into the crisp air. The stars were so bright and I could feel the moonlight and I felt wonderful, shining on things in the night sky.

Some of the other lights were bigger and very fast and it was sometimes hard to keep up with them, but I learned how to move swiftly. They showed me many different moves and taught me how to go into a sunbeam and move along it so I could go right inside a flower. Oh, I loved the flowers and all the different colours! We would play there with the butterflies and the bees and we would go in the trees. It was very exciting in the trees because we could vibrate and make the blossoms fall. In the gardens, we sparkled on the grass so the cats would chase us. We chased each other too, zipping and zooming.

When it rained, we would go down by the side of a rock for shelter while we merged. We would blend our lights and it was a most peculiar sensation as we attempted this! It felt tingly and I could feel the warmth and the hum of the others. We would join together as one big light. The ones on the outside would push down to keep the orb together and we would be off, moving slowly and glowing in the dim light. We did this out of concern that the new lights might lose their way in the rain shower. I always went in the middle of the orb and although it felt unusual, I made sure I was right inside before I pressed my light-tendrils down to stay put. I didn't want to lose my way! I didn't want to be on my own again with no one to play with!