

# The Voice and the Ink

**O**nce, in a quiet part of the world  
where rivers ran backwards  
and the stars could be heard humming in the dark,  
there lived two souls  
who loved each other  
but often could not understand one another.

One spoke in Voice,  
strong and alive.

She could speak truths on the wind,  
shape feeling with tone,  
charm birds down from trees  
just by the way she laughed.

Her words danced like fireflies —  
bright, quick,  
full of life.

The other spoke in Ink.

His truths came slowly,  
like spring water from stone.

He needed silence to gather them,  
space to find the shape of what he truly meant.

But when he wrote,  
it was as if the page became a mirror  
that showed the soul itself —  
honest, aching, luminous.

They loved each other  
as best they could.

But when the days were heavy  
or the heart was full,  
their difference became a wall.

“Speak to me!” said Voice.  
“Say what you feel. Right here. Right now.”

“I’m trying,” said Ink,  
“but I lose it when I speak.  
My words run away like startled deer.

If you'll let me write —  
just for a little —  
I can give you something truer.”

It wasn't from fear.  
He would have spoken fire if he could.  
But for him, words took time —  
like stars forming slowly in the dark.

“That's not real,” she said.  
“Real is what's spoken.”

And so the deeper truths remained unsaid.  
The Voice felt abandoned.  
The Ink felt unseen.  
And silence grew between them —  
not the good kind.

One night, in despair,  
Ink wandered into the forest,  
asking no one in particular:

“What do you do  
when the way you can speak  
is not the way you're allowed to?”

The wind answered.  
Or maybe it was the firelight.  
It said:  
“Some are born to speak aloud.  
Some are born to speak in silence.  
The true miracle is not in the speaking.  
The miracle is in the hearing.”

The next morning, Ink returned.  
He handed her a story —  
not long,  
but heavy with truth.

“This is not to replace our voices,” he said.  
“Only to open the door to them.”

She read it.  
When she finished, her voice was quiet —  
not angry, not cold.  
Just tired.

“I don’t know how to get through to you,” she said.  
“I don’t, either,” he said.  
And that was all.

They sat together in the hush that followed —  
not holding hands,  
not looking away,  
just breathing in the stillness between them,  
where something was missing  
and something was real.

Outside, the wind moved gently through the branches,  
stirring nothing but the fading leaves of autumn.

— *William Zeitler*  
2025 June 29

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