

The Loss of My Twin K

by Erika Byrne-Ludwig

I have now migrated to new surroundings. A new master, no, a new mistress. The fluids have slightly changed: they taste odd and could even be toxic as I feel a burn inside me. Otherwise the temperature is the same with its usual variables.

I long for my twin K. We were used to our liquid exchanges. He was there and I was here. In precious terms, those must have been our golden years ... before the scalpel. When my tubes were abruptly cut off, I confess I thought I would expire. I was pulled out with rubbery hands, and I remember shivering.

It all went so quickly that I didn't have time to sever ties with my twin K and this still weighs on my filters curled inside me. Before the dissection I was experiencing the same flows, perfumes and reeks, spices and relishes, as he did. You could have perceived harmony in our partnership. What will now describe my remaining years, I wonder. It will never be gold again. Not even silver. At this point there's no harm in dreaming of rubies — my favourite stones —, the colour of my skin.

What happened was ... I was asked to make a sacrifice. Actually, it wasn't a request. It simply was decided on my behalf that I would be a donor. I had no choice, no voice. The order, coming from above me, was that I be moved into another body, a stranger's, an alien's.

Before migrating they tested me to assess my general health: no hidden illness, no touches of senility, no nasty surprises. I had to be a legitimate lifesaver. I could have told them that it was a futile exercise. But the soldiers in sterile whites paraded around my shell, the body that enclosed me. When the time came I was placed in a cool box and driven away at rapid speed to reach the recipient. Saving a life became my novel duty.

Because of the traumatism I had to undergo, my slippery coat has become slightly frayed. Far away is my twin K. Like me he is now alone, in charge of the entire odorous sap. Inside the narrower frame of my mistress, I battle with her habits, her juices, her scents.

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Her survival drugs have given me a few starts until I learned to bend to her needs and whims. No genuine ruby moments for me, just life with more knocks, fewer treats, some prickles, some burns and opposite me a small corner of absence, a vague and deluded ruby-coloured void.

