

# The Open Perch (Valentine's Day Challenge)

*by* Paul Steven Stone

I imagine her as a bird. All silver in her feathered finery as she flies over landscapes reduced in size like a topographical map.

Where she is coming from I cannot say. But where she is bound, the far distant perch that calls to her like a guiding star . . . ah, there's a thought that brings up a smile!

For hers is a journey that could take her across continents, lifetimes, even the universe for all I know. While here I wait in the crow's nest of my solitary life, watching for a woman whose features I won't recognize but whose heart I will know intimately with the certainty of a lover.

And in truth I am not waiting, but also flying in my soul to meet her, a journey that has taken me across the span of my own lifetime and the gulf of that same mysteriously mapped universe.

I cannot say when she and I last met--in what former life, in what manner of relationship. We could have been brother and sister, parent and child, even lovers in a doomed marriage. But in this lifetime we have passed through each other's night skies without taking notice, living our lives apart while slowly and inevitably being drawn together like planets falling into each other's orbits.

Now, it is time for us to meet and I know it. Just as she must know the same truth within her own heart. What a beautiful illusion this is. What pride the Master Magician must feel to see us flying towards each other while the watching world believes us stuck in our lives, trudging across the same mundane existences we trudged across yesterday, and all the yesterdays before.

But no measure of time or distance truly separates two kindred spirits. What matters most is the rightness of the moment not the

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limitations of physics. What matters most is the urgency of two hearts to once again be joined.

And so I feel her presence. I sense the shadow of her wings as it glides across my soul's landscape as certainly as I sense fragrance from flowers and moisture in a mist. We are flying towards each other through a sky free of cloud or obstruction, both of us unable to resist the accelerating pull of love's gravity.

In a world where the laws of physics have been superceded by the inevitability of attraction, time no longer holds sway over possibilities; yet ironically it has somehow become the right time for this cosmic connection to be made. The right moment for her to find me and for me to find her.

I imagine her as a bird. Flying with a certainty known only by an arrow truly shot or a soul mate heading for the open perch in her lover's heart.

She is flying to me. And I am flying to her.

Two souls who, in the perfection of some unwritten Grand Plan, will once again become one.

Love, I am waiting.

