



ROYAL DE LUXE NANTES

Liverpool
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Memories of the Grandmother behind the Planck wall

The first time I ever ate anything, I was almost small:

I had only two toes.

They told me more would come later.

Every year my grandfather would cut a new one from the shoe tree with his secateurs.

He cut a rose bud which he would then delicately sew onto me for hours.

I must say, I was happier about him looking after me than about growing up.

When, finally, my feet were close to completion,

I was able to begin some movement;

and when I saw myself in the mirror,

I discovered a beautiful grandmother without any scaffolding. Sparkling with hope, my hair blown back by the big ventilators that the giant elephants

used to move the clouds into Chicago factories, where they would transform them into flattened slices of blues that people would place onto record players.

I was so proud and beautiful, like bunches of balloons sold at fun fairs

that lift hippopotamuses into the sky.

One day, we made catapults with my grandfather's braces.

Of course, we enjoyed knocking off the planets that hung suspended in the universe.

It created meteors that were propelled at the speed of 4 million light-years per hour which then exploded billions of intergalactic rocks.

Lights and colours that we had never seen before flashed all over the place.

It has to be said that these pranks were completely forbidden. We had been told: "Don't you mess with equilibrium!"

My girlfriends and I couldn't have cared less about equilibrium.

Especially considering they hadn't sewn all our toes on yet

and that we had to sit our arses on cliffs all day in front of all eternity.

Anyway, we had a map of the sky that we had picked from my grandfather's pocket.

We could read that, for sure.

So we aimed for all the areas that were of the "please do not touch" variety...

and boom, one day we hit the target.

It created a vibration like the explosion of several suns on a motorway.

A magnetic field more vibrant than a multitude of oceans mixed together in a cocktail shaker.

The universe emitted a ray of transparent light.

Everyone gathered round to watch the result.

Some had tears in their eyes.

I can't begin to tell you how foolish we felt, like real fools.

Then everybody left. We looked at one another. They came back later to pick us up and put us to bed, as we couldn't walk.

They said nothing.

The next day though, we got a serious telling off. It went on all day. We felt really bad...they shouted and shouted. How we were the worst of the worst!

That night, as I lay crying under the blankets, my grandfather came. He sat smoking his pipe.

He spoke calmly. I remember the gentleness of his eyes floating up to the ceiling. "Little one, you didn't completely break the rock, but you have killed the dinosaurs."

It turned out that our pranks had created men and women.

Years later, we finally learned to run.

My best friend's brother's uncle released our trained cheetah and it galloped around the stars chasing comets.

It sped around faster than light

and as it spectacularly skidded round corners, it sometimes banged its head against planets. Having lost its balance, it would spin off into space before falling flat onto the large rocks.

A huge party was being prepared. Jumping rope and rebellious hopscotch games were underway and as I turned my head towards the table I noticed it:

the fork!

The implement was huge and had apparently been sent from the sky like a javelin with the help of a crossbow.

The fork's prongs had pierced the huge thickness of the wooden table and had landed slap bang on a pig that had been nibbling on scraps there.

The impact was a surprise to everyone.

We had never seen a projectile like this.

It was at this moment that hundreds of families threw handfuls of sulphur into the air. This produced lightning above us. Shards of disorganised light cracked like whips on the clouds.

An army of fire-fighters catapulted icebergs into the cosmos and the whole thing made us dreamy with pleasure.

It was at this precise moment that my friend pinched my arm and pointed to the highlight of the event.

We had a guest.

A guest who had come from the other side of the Planck wall.

Even within memory of a hippopotamus, no one could have conjured up the memory of a party that had smelled this good.

He was a huge giant, though smaller than us, and his name was Rabelais, first name François.

He headed straight for the kitchen and taught us some grandmother's recipes.

Saucepans larger than buses turned upside down, were used as giant pâté terrines.

He poured tons of boiling water onto trees in order to uncover the roots that snaked away and were gathered up to make soup.

So many imaginary recipes entered into our young grandmothers' memories.

Finally he returned into the wall.

Despite being very young, my friends and I fell head over heels in love,

a cactus in the head, and our hearts sank to the bottom of the sea and lay next to the rocks on the sea bed.

Right and now to bed!

Tomorrow I am burying myself with the Little Girl Giant.

Come and join us for this great departure...

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