

Two Little Birds  
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When I try to remember her face, the only image that appears in my mind is when she was thirteen and awkward, her hair cut short like a boy's, and she sat perched on the arm of the old sofa like a chickadee surprised by an early frost. That's the part that I can recall with crystal clarity, the depth of apprehension in her eyes, even though her arms hung loosely at her sides and an air of nonchalance rested across her shoulders. As if she had accepted whatever was to come already and perhaps we should just get on with it.

One afternoon years later, we met at a diner. She was in town on school break, visiting her parents. It was then that she told me that she was born on the cusp of Sagittarius and Capricorn. The only reason she'd pull herself from her relentless climb up the ladder, would be to travel the world on the weekends. She wore converse with her dress, ate a plate of french fries with a diet coke, and laughed when we read that the world was ending. So often that night I found myself pulled into her orbit, eager to feel her magnificence as it radiated off of her - a perfect balance of old Hollywood glam and London punk rock. There was a satisfying cohesion to her dichotomies.

She spoke about her move back east, suggesting the inevitability of it all with a single flick of her wrist. I tried to imagine her in New York City with the hordes of corporate lackeys that she called the glass-eyed drones. That's when she laughed. Deep and throaty, as if still holding back the most important detail of a spilled secret. A joke that could only be understood by her, which made it all the more intriguing. She left me at the diner with a pat on the arm and shot me a see you later from over her shoulder as she left for the train.

Since then, I've gone back through the yearbooks, the pictures taken on my phone, and all I can find are photos of her turning away. Her silhouette against the stadium lights, a girl leaning forward to run. Two little birds with one pair of wings.