

2 The Integration

When his parents died, Otus, the little owl, fled the dark and violent greenhouse where he lived. He traveled far, south, and found a bright, welcoming greenhouse. But everything is so different, will he manage to fit in?

The Integration

For several nights now, in the immense greenhouse, Otus has been searching ... He searches at the request of Tycia, his teacher ... He searches everywhere, without distraction ... He searches for the source of the light.

Tired, he rests for a moment. A sound of wings makes him turn his head. Bubo, a friendly great owl, lands beside him.

— hello Otus, how are you?

— Hello Bubo. I'm fine thank you, but I can't manage to find where the light comes from!

— Ah Otus, that's a difficult exercise for a little owl, alone. But many birds can help you. Have you asked around you?

— No, I didn't dare, replies Otus.

— That's a shame, says Bubo. Here, you can count on the community.

And Bubo flies off, without another word.

Otus is astonished. He's allowed to talk to strangers, just like that?

He heads toward a neighboring tree where an old owl lives.

— Hello, my name is Otus and I'm searching for where the light comes from. Can you help me please?

— Hello Otus, my name is Mitor, says the elder in a quavering voice. You're quite young, I searched just like you at your age, and would you like to know what I found?

— Yes, I'd like that! exclaims Otus, intrigued.

— Then hold on tight! continues Mitor. This light of life, this clear light, it comes from us, the birds, and from all living beings! Oh yes!!! But be careful, for it to work, you have to do your exercises well and be TB in life!

— TB? asks Otus.

— Ah yes, replies Mitor: Tranquil and Balanced, meaning calm, self-reliant, open and caring toward others ... But, phew!!! It's not always easy! I've known some poorly lit birds who wanted to control everything!

— But how? ... Otus wants to know.

— I don't quite remember the rest, says Mitor, ask the others!

Otus thanks him and continues on his way.

His friend Chévia, a little owl who is teaching him to fly, joins him.

— Ah hello Chévia, how happy I am to see you!

— Hello Otus, are you looking for the source of the light? she asks with a little smile

— Yes, but I'm not making much progress!

— Ah, I'm sorry to hear that, she replies. Come fly with me, to take your mind off it! There's a great updraft, to the west. It can carry us far up into the sky!

Otus's spirits lift at once. He loves flying, and especially with Chévia!

In a few wingbeats they reach an immense tree near the greenhouse. Otus goes to the highest branch.

He concentrates for a moment ... and throws himself into the void! Wowwww, this is amazing!!!

He spreads his wings, glides for a moment, then joins Chévia in the updraft. The two of them rise into the sky at full speed!

Otus passes through a small cloud, enjoys its coolness, plays in the wind with the feathers of his wings and tail, spins and swoops, laughing!

In the distance, the horizon calls to him ...

So, being a bird, is this also part of it — having so much freedom and so much joy in the sky?!

He turns his head toward his friend.

— But, Chévia, you're glowing!!

— Yes Otus, that's when I feel good, like now! she replies.

— Is it because you're TB? asks Otus, proud of his freshly gained knowledge.

— Well, well, exclaims Chévia, I see you already know a lot! I also practice daily exercises that shed light on what's important in my life!

Otus thinks these must be the same exercises as Mitor's. He opens his beak to learn more, but Chévia gets there first:

— Can you still see my light? she asks, her eyes shining.

— Yes Chévia, replies Otus. You are ... uh ... your light is very beautiful, he corrects himself, beautiful like that of the greenhouse!

— Aaahhh!!! goes Chévia, delighted. Come on, let's go, now!

She winks at her friend and dashes off at full speed toward the sea! He speeds up in turn and follows her with a big smile.

The Explanation

The following evening, Otus meets up with Tycia, his teacher, and reports on his search:

— In the greenhouse, Otus begins, the light comes from the birds who do their exercises well and who are TB.

— TB? asks Tycia.

— Uh ... stammers Otus, trying to remember Mitor's words, Tranquil and Balanced, meaning calm, comfortable in their own skin, good with others, good in what they do, but without wanting to control everything ...

— Well done Otus! Tycia encourages him. When birds, as here, are many to do the exercises, they live free and at peace, TB as you say, and together create a clear light that unites them and helps them flourish.

— But Tycia, why, in the greenhouse where I was before, was it all dark ...

— Ah Otus, when there is too much violence, the birds become too stressed. They suffer and are afraid, they close in on themselves and become dark, sad, brutal in turn.

— Yes, I know, replies Otus, thinking of his former life, of all that violence he endured and the fear that gripped him so often. But how do you manage it here?

— Every bird, says Tycia, learns from a very young age to become a bird of clear light, to practice exercises that illuminate the mind and contribute to this beautiful luminous atmosphere in which we live in peace. We will teach them to you soon.

Become a bird of clear light? Otus can't wait to learn more!

Grateful, he smiles at Tycia then returns to his cozy shelter, in his little tree that smells so good.

He falls asleep and dreams ...

He dreams that he is slowly flying over a great, wide valley, grey and calm. In the distance, mountains with clear peaks, as if snow-capped, bring a deep sense of serenity.

He approaches a grey greenhouse. Surprised, he sees his two parents come out of it and join him!!

— Mom, dad! What joy to find you again!

— Otus, replies his mother, what a fine bird you are becoming!

— We were able to follow your adventures, says his father, and we're proud of you! You even know how to fly now!

— Yes, it's wonderful! replies Otus. But how ... But where are we?

— We are in the spirit world, his mother answers. It's a place of passage, after death, where each spirit prepares to join a mysterious beyond.

— But, am I dead too?! Otus worries.

— No, you're very much alive, his father says, amused, it's your spirit that is traveling!

— So I'll be able to come back and see you, he asks hopefully?

— Of course Otus, gladly! his mother replies with a broad smile.

We will however have to leave this world, one day. For now, we are stuck here, because there isn't enough light to illuminate our path ...

Otus wakes up, happy to have found his parents again!

That same evening, he tells Tycia about his dream.

— Is light needed in the spirit world too? he asks.

— Yes Otus, and it's the same light of life. It is necessary for the flourishing of all beings.

Otus is amazed by this continuity between the worlds.

The Commitment

— Will I be able to bring light to my parents? he asks Tycia.

— Of course Otus, she replies. Would you like to stay with us to train and freely develop your talents?

Otus is moved! He has wanted this so badly since his arrival!

— Yes, I would be proud and happy to! he replies. Thank you so much Tycia!

She smiles and affectionately draws him between her wings. Surprised, Otus feels a wave of joy overwhelm him and tears flow, gently.

Now and here, he is finally home ...

And he knows what he wants to do: become a bird of clear light, live in peace, illuminate the paths of the spirit world.

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