

5 The journey

Otus is now free to travel between worlds. He has decided to use his new abilities to rescue darkened beings. But will he survive long enough on this perilous path?

A wind of hope

Otus the young owl dreams that he is walking freely in the spirit world. He thinks of his deceased parents and decides to join them.

— Mom, dad! he exclaims as he reaches them.

— Ah Otus, what joy to find you again! his mother replies with a broad smile.

— And you're an adult now, quite a fine bird! his father notes, happy.

— Thank you, replies Otus. I tried several times to come back to you, but a dark creature kept stopping me!

— We knew about it, his mother confides, and we rejoiced when you managed to soothe it.

Suddenly, the atmosphere around them darkens. Otus turns his head and sees a spirit approaching, wrapped in dark spirals. His parents step back and let out a cry of anguish.

Thanks to his training, the young owl then radiates a great, beautiful light that illuminates the newcomer and the whole valley around them; the dark spirals dissipate, leaving the spirit disoriented.

— Otus, thank you on his behalf, says his mother. Let's go help him, now that he's freed himself from his violent thoughts.

— I'm coming too, his father continues. Otus, more and more spirits like him are arriving here. And what you just did gives us a lot of hope! See you soon! he says as he leaves.

Otus opens his eyes and sees Bubo and Tycia, two bird friends, approaching his little tree.

— Hello Otus, says Bubo, a great change has just taken place in the spirit world. Did you feel it too?

— Hello Bubo, hello Tycia, Otus greets them. No, I didn't feel anything. I was with my parents and had just shared clear light with a spirit whose thoughts were violent.

— That's exactly it! Tycia observes, smiling. Hello Otus, you've stirred up the spirit world with your intervention!

— Really? asks Otus. I'm glad I was able to help that troubled spirit. But why is it so important?

— Because, replies Bubo, more and more living beings here live in violence. Once dead, their spirits remain darkened and disturb the beings around them. But when they receive clear light, they calm down and life flourishes again! You're showing that it's possible, and simple! A wind of hope is blowing now.

— Then I'll have to travel through the worlds to soothe every violent-behaving being, Otus worries.

— Ah, that's an impossible task for a single owl, even one as gifted as you, replies Bubo, laughing. It will take many birds of clear light to manage that.

— And a lot of time too, Tycia adds. But first, you could take a few days to relax with Chévia — she often talks to me about a journey she'd like to take with you, she says, giving him a wink.

The journey

Otus's face lights up at the thought. He goes to see Chévia after her lessons. They smile at each other, happy to be together again.

— Hello Chévia, says Otus, did your lessons go well, were the students attentive?

— Hello Otus, I'm happy to see you. Yes, everything went well, thank you! And you? she asks?

Otus tells her about his adventure and Tycia's suggestion.

— Oh really! she exclaims, delighted, a journey with you?

— Yes! Otus confirms, enthusiastic.

Eyes shining, Chévia thinks it over:

— Where could we go? ... Let's see ... The southern islands? she suggests.

— Oh yes! Otus is delighted. that would be a beautiful trip, with open space and a fine horizon, like here, by the sea.

— Ah, you're right, Chévia continues, not enough novelty. What about a full migration, like our ancestors did? You seemed interested in that for a moment?

— Yes Chévia, that really would be a great adventure, a long journey that would no doubt take us far from home!

— Ah, maybe too long, Chévia admits, we have work waiting for us here ... Let's see, I'm thinking ... I would really like to know the place where you were born, to see the path you traveled to get here, to learn more about your life before ...

Otus is touched by his friend's curiosity and attentiveness toward him.

The memories come flooding back: life with his parents, so gentle, so kind, the violence around them, his long journey on his little legs, the great help he received along the way from a welcoming clan ... Yes, he would love to share all of that with Chévia!

So it will be ... the North!

They tell Bubo and Tycia their destination.

— Ah what a great idea! exclaims Bubo. Otus, if you visit the clan that took you in for a while, perhaps you could ask them how we might help them in turn? What do you think?

— Oh yes, replies Otus, I owe them a lot and I really like this idea!

— But how can we go about it, and what should we offer them? asks Chévia.

— First we need to listen to them, Tycia tells them, smiling. See what their difficulties are, and then we can look for the best solutions together with them.

Otus nods with a smile; he's glad that this trip with Chévia can also be of service to his friends in the clan.

The young birds take flight, following the long path Otus took during his escape.

He easily finds his bearings again, the smells, the sounds, the vegetation ...

They fly for a long time, in silence, savoring this journey, this brand-new love, this intimate connection between them and with the life around them.

Suddenly they sense the presence of a great horned owl hunting.

— Careful! says Chévia, he may have already spotted us!

— Yes, replies Otus, his heart pounding, he's heading our way.

The great bird of prey charges straight at them at full speed, talons wide open.

Otus and Chévia together radiate a great, clear light and share it with this bird ... Nothing!

The bird continues its flight, reaches them and ... closes its eyes and veers sharply away with a cry. It resumes its flight further off.

— that was very close! says Otus, relieved.

— Yes, replies Chévia. He's a powerful, self-assured bird, whose mind is hard to illuminate!

Otus tries to understand how this being became violent. His environment is violent, his eagle-king is violent, that matters a great deal, but Otus thinks there's something else too, perhaps connected to the fearsome dark creatures of the spirit world ...

They reach the clan, where they are welcomed with joy!

— So Otus, asks Kotis, did you find the bright greenhouse you were looking for?

— Yes, replies Otus, after many days of walking. It took us barely a few hours to cover the same path in the other direction, a flight that went by far too quickly for my taste, he says with a wink toward his friend.

— Yes, adds Chévia, smiling, a lovely journey, but with one bad encounter. We narrowly escaped a great horned owl on the hunt.

— There are more and more of them, Kotis continues, and moving regularly is no longer enough to protect us ... Many of our young are following the example of the most violent birds. They leave the clan and we never see them again.

They then share a meal, during which Otus and Chévia tell of their life in the bright greenhouse, which greatly interests the clan's birds.

— How do you manage to live in peace? asks Pilo.

— Every bird practices regular clear light exercises, replies Chévia, to soothe their mind and master their fear and violence. Together, we create a great luminous dome where we live in peace.

— And who is your eagle-king? asks Kotis.

We don't have one, replies Chévia. Living together in clear light lets us know each other well and organize ourselves simply. Each of us leads their life freely, in close connection with others or more independently, depending on the moment. And lastly, when one of us runs into difficulties and darkens, we all bring them light and help them according to our abilities.

The clan's birds have shining eyes. They too would love to live in light and peace.

Ideas are flying!

Once back home, Chévia and Otus recount their journey and the clan's difficult situation.

All the birds of the greenhouse are present and talk among themselves in a great hubbub! Many ideas fly:

— I propose, says Aquilus, that we help them settle as far as possible from the dark greenhouses and keep away any violent visitors who might still pass through.

— Yes, Bubo continues, for my part I propose that we build a protective dome of clear light with them. That will support their development.

— Yes, Tycia adds, I propose that we pass on all our knowledge to them so they become self-sufficient, starting with the inner peace and clear light exercises.

— Yes, and I propose that we organize exchanges and celebrations between our communities! adds Banaru, a traveling great horned owl with infectious cheer.

All the birds approve warmly, then sign up to take part in the proposed actions.

Otus appreciates the many ideas raised in the bright greenhouse to improve the situation of the clan's birds, who seem stuck.

He feels this change within himself too, between his past as a little owl living in fear and violence and his confidence now, thanks to the education he received, the exercises practiced every day, the trusting and friendly relationships with the other birds ... This bright greenhouse is also a greenhouse of ideas, with great creative potential!

He wonders, however, whether the powerful dark creatures of the spirit world play a role in all this violence surrounding the clan. He goes to speak to Aquilus about it, who offers to help him.

They settle in, close their eyes, and together begin a journey by spirit toward the eagle-king of the dark greenhouse closest to the clan. His name is Aiglata. He is immense and very dark. Sensing a presence, he turns this way and that, without discovering his discreet visitors.

A dark, subtle tether extends from his body and disappears into the distance. Otus and Aquilus follow it, sink into the earth, and right at the center spot a dark, enormous, terrifying creature connected to that same tether, as well as to thousands of others!

Otus then feels an excruciating pain and weakens very quickly. Aquilus immediately pulls him away and draws him out into deep space.

They stay there a long while, drawing on the light of the stars to do their clear light exercises and regain their strength.

No doubt about it: it's this extremely powerful creature that holds the eagle-king in its grip, feeding on his life energy and that of all his subjects.

— So, will we have to soothe this creature too? asks Bubo, after Aquilus and Otus give their report.

— Yes, confirms Aquilus, and we'll need the help of every available bird to manage it ...

Otus, uneasy, can still feel the creature's frightening power. But he is reassured by the sense that many allies, throughout the vastness of space, are ready to help them.

Back home, he thinks again of the lovely journey made with Chévia. At that same moment, she comes to join him.

He welcomes her joyfully and makes room for her in his little tree that smells so good. Pressed close together, they fall asleep in peace.