

The old man told me to stand in front of the moon.

“What do you see?” He asked. Night softened the glow in the old man’s eyes, faintly engulfed in a ghastly luster.

“I do not see anything,” I said, “It is always like this.”

“Maybe,” the man knelt down and sat on a nearby rock, “nothing has happened to you then, the moon has not bruised you in the way it has bruised me.”

“How?” I sunk down next to him, he did not look so old now.

“My wife is a faraway planet, a force of humanity on Atlas’ shoulders. I met her when I was a young boy, weak to foreign touch and the light of juvenile mornings.” The man turned his head toward me, his eyes, opaque like milk. “I do not look like this in real life, but loving a star stranded in the sky is sure to blind you someday.”

“What are you telling me?” I said.

“Nothing that you do not already know, but you are careless and impatient, you seem to forget that trivial beings hold no power over the likes of gods and angels, we may haunt them like ghosts but our deaths leave them quickly. There will always be more of us.”

The man touched the tufts of his hair, it fell from his head in streams of sand and gravel. He was falling apart, his body flooded the ground in conquered movements. And he told me to stand in front of the moon again.

“What do you see now?”

“Nothing.” I watched him collapse, surrounded by white light, he was becoming the earth around us. “The moon? I see her.”

He smiled the tissue of his teeth, stark against the dirt swallowing him, his body was gone now, only his head remained.

“I think” he whispered, “that is all you need to see.”