

I had a dream the other night. Not like most. I dreamt that an eagle came to visit.

And then the strangest thing happened. He began to speak. He said "I've come to teach and bring an answer for some questions that you been perplexing you for some time. Before I could begin to consider what this may be he spread his wings and began to rise in the sky and somehow, don't ask my how, I was caught up with him and followed.

For traveled for I don't know how long until we began to descend upon a landscape that seemed quite foreign yet so familiar. It almost seemed like those 3d panorama display I had seen in museums although these were real people and I was looking down at them.

I first saw a man. All alone. He looked very angry. And cold. And hard. Not at all likeable. The eagle and I descended and stood in front of him. "What do you see?" the eagle asked. "I see someone is unreasonable, cranky, and not really pleasant at all". "Look closer." He said. And I looked. And as my eyes met those of this man and I gazed deep into them I began to see a change. As I looked inside I saw someone who was uncommonly sensitive, and in many ways unsure of who they were. They had been hurt when they were very little and never really recovered. And now in order to protect themselves they erected this façade of hardness and distance shutting out all those who cared for him in a misguided, but understandable effort to protect themselves. And now instead of a cold, hard, man who I would just as soon steer clear of my heart began to melt with compassion as I saw past the mask he presented and participate with who he really was.

The eagle guided me away from my new found friend and as I turned I almost ran into a lady that was flitting about and chatting and cavorting with a group of friends. It was obvious that she was, and wanted to be, the center of attention. She laughed loudly, you know the kind, and was almost boisterous in here mannerisms. Some were even intimidated by her. I stood in the back of the crowd and watched. The eagle directed my attention to a little girl standing close to lady tightly gripping her dress. The little girl was quite and timid and very unsure of herself. When she spoke she never really felt like she was heard. And eventually she came to the conclusion that it must be because she did not have anything important to say. As I watched the timid little girl and the loud lady, I realized that the outward bravado displayed was really a protection mechanism for a timid, unsure little girl inside. The brashness faded away and I began to see the heart of the person before me. The generosity, the wisdom, the humility that only needed some to show her her true self. To look past the outward and discover the treasure of the person she really craved to be but didn't know how to find.

The eagle pointed to a small boy who was standing close to me. I'm sure how he got there. I didn't notice him approach. He must have walked so silently. He was holding a small box wrapped in brilliant blue paper and tied with a bow. He didn't say a word but when he walked away I was compelled to follow. We walked to a nearby wooden bench that suddenly appeared. I sat down beside him.

He opened the box and I saw it was filled with photos of people I knew and had know in my life. Some were those I admired and looked up to – other were those I rather would have never met. Some had helped me some had hurt me. Some I had passed by without even noticing them. Some had persisted with self destructive behaviours and it seemed no one, including myself, were able to make them see the damage they were doing to themselves. And on the reverse of each one was, what in many cases, seemed like a different person. I saw motives, desires, fears, wishes, hopes, and dreams. So many of which each person hid deep inside them covering them with a mask of angry, fear, false laughter, bravado, and hurts and pains from years gone by. After I finished looking at each picture. It took some time for there were many. The boy carefully placed them back in the box, re-tied it with the ribbon, and walked away.

After a long period silence the eagle spoke again. "You see when I'm circling high in the heavens I look down and can see the smallest blade of grass. I can pick out a mouse with a thorny group of bushes. I can see past the rough and sometimes confusing exterior to the truth that lies beneath. So many of your kind hide in the thickets and trees and the long grass. So when you look at their exterior they may appear as they did to you before this moment. During our journey I have shown you that so many times there's a truth that lies hidden so well beneath the surface. The true essence of who people are. I've given you this gift that you may touch the person that lies beneath the thorns. That you may touch those with compassion who need it most but outwards seem to repel it.

I sat very still for the longest time while I digested what I had seen and heard. The faces of so many people cascading through my mind. I began to understand. To see.

And then. In a blink of an eye I was back in bed staring at the ceiling.

I had a dream the other night. Not like most. Especially considering that as I rolled over to fall back asleep I came face to face with an eagle feather gently tied with a brilliant blue ribbon lying on the pillow beside me. And I smiled. And I know.

Tomorrow was going to be a good day.