



NAMES FOR THE SKY

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It is morning, I have been up since before dawn. The world is outside my window and the wind today seems like it comes directly from the North, where it is cold and smells of pine and mountains. The clouds look like the clay foundations of heavenly cities, dove grey tinged by the golden yellow of the rising sun, back by the sparkling light blue of the sky. It is 5:48 a.m.

There is a palm tree and the house behind it had marvelously reflective windows. The light catches on all of these surfaces brilliantly. The grillwork on my window divides the scenery into twenty six horizontal and four vertical sections. Then there is the matter of the window panes, one layered over the other, dimming the morning-bright colours, stealing the vibrancy away effectively. I resent all the parts of my window that separates the sky from me. I resent all the parts of myself that separate the sky from me. The worst sort of prisons have windows – and have a living world just outside the reaches of its prisoner, rotting like a

breathing corpse, like a flower.

I want to stand at the windows of all the houses outside my windows. I want to see what the world looks like from there. It is physically painful that I am not, body and soul, a part of this – but the separation is blissful, I am a blessed observer.

It bothers me that my favorite color is grey yet I cannot decide on a single shade. The clouds today seem like they would be the perfect fit. What is this color – is it really the aforementioned dove grey? Or is it some shade that nobody has ever seen before today, before right now? There are white clouds too but I know what that color is. It is the color of marble, of pearls, made luminous by virtue of hiding the sun behind it, millions of miles and matter away.

The wind is cold. Not biting cold, but it is the same cold that I sometimes feel on my ankles radiating from stone floors soon after a storm. Just the right amount of cold, like being caressed by something holy. At this point I feel as if the reader expects me to quote some romantic poet about this scene – but

nobody else has seen this but me. Me from right here, on my wooden bed inside a house where the windows are large and face westward towards this sky. Nobody I can see the same thing as me, not even my neighbors. For all I know they perceive the grey of the clouds as drab and oppressive, and would much more appreciate the blue beneath.

But I think this is beautiful, and so I must write it down. I do not know if this will ever find an audience.

There is a tree beyond the palm, it is one of those trees I have seen by the bridge at Mohammadpur. The branches hang low under the weight of its yellow blossoms, somehow simultaneously held skyward. If this tree was a woman, she would be the one in the most outrageous fashions – commanding the audience wherever she went, and she would always have an audience, of course she would.

I don't wish, for once, to be a bird – and not just because by now it would be trite. No, it is just that none of the birds flying around are straying far from the buildings and into the sky. They keep orbiting the same spot, hopping two feet

in all directions – never into the heavens. I wonder if there is someone up there that might hunt them down.

The heavens, I think, is one of those rare, all-encompassing names for the sky. Just this morning the clouds were floating in little, separated sections and tinged the most vibrant shade of peach on the bottom, and their tops were the color of a handsome man's business suit. Interesting, like the heavens I suppose. And sometimes before a storm the sky becomes much too plain, too bright and quiet. Boring, like the heavens. Or now, lovely as I have ever seen it – a sea for an angel's islands, like the heavens.

Today I am sure, when I am failing, my knees are failing, my breath is failing, I will look for the sky. Always, I will look at the sky. Look at the sky, the solution to all problems. The poetic equivalent of the surprisingly efficient coconut oil.

I am suddenly bothered by the way Lana Del Rey says 'ovation' – *oh-vay-she-uhn*. The need to rhyme is certainly no excuse to mispronounce a word, I take personal offence.