

Sun and Ocean

by

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Six Scions of the Sun

In the time when Ko the Sun was still young, they learned that their radiance alone was not enough to lavishly nurture life in the world. Lively agents were needed to dwell and travel among the fledgling denizens, inspiring them with the vigorous Stories that would encourage them to flourish. So, from their own life-giving essence, they bore six children, each blessed with a different aspect of their nature.

Kofi and Koko arrived before the others, twins springing forth in joy from the same sunbeam. Kofi appeared first, dark and bitter as a dawn that tarries languidly in breaking, carrying however within them the cherry red spark of wakefulness and clarity. Koko followed mere moments afterward, sweet and rich with the weary ruddiness of the dusk, bearing - as if it were a fluted package - gifts of contentment and comfort.

Together, the Twins embodied the Sun's power to quicken not just with volatile vitality but soothing serenity.

No longer lonely, the world began to blossom with renewed vigor, showing off for the Twins who lived in the experience of the moment. Sun knew the joy of observing their children at play, and their tears of happiness fell into Ocean. Thus was born Salt, called also Saline and Sal in their bodies, who is in any form the reminiscence of the world's life, the memories of all that knows the primordial seas to be its first home, empowered in this manner of being to preserve and enhance.

And after tears, laughter — a lightning and lightening flash of brilliance, sour-sharp, the child Citrus who rides the rainbow. Citrus favors those who brave the spirited blast that bursts forth from events of transformative change.

As the evening wore on, in the wake of these four acute siblings, Seaweed gently floated in on a tide of Ocean's wisdom. Complex and deep, an umami fulfillment, Seaweed brought their siblings together, a lingering mingled unity, the sum greater than its parts.

And then, in the moment before Sun turned their weary face to sleep, one last child was born from just inside the Edge of Dreams, metallic and warm, velvet and atavistic, taboo because it is the very taste of life... Blood.

Each day, the siblings would race after Ko in their trek across Sky. Kofi woke up the world at daybreak. Salt coalesced memories in the morning light. Citrus relished the intense change of noon headed towards evening. Seaweed brought them all together in richness, in time for Koko to enfold the oncoming dusk in sweetness. And then Blood would break

away to stalk the fringes, and the depths, nurturing the life that prospered best while peering outward from darkness.

As siblings will do, they quarreled, on occasion over petty jealousies, but increasingly often over the likes of *dominion*, such as who was the most important. The more that they engaged in such mundane squabbles, and the more time that they spent among their charges in the world, the less celestial they became. Over time, they were drawn in fully by the world and transformed into the entities that they had fostered: beans, fruits, crystals, roots, and so on... as well as blood.

With this Story I answer your question, child of my own:

Where do flavors come from?

While we can enjoy them each on their own, we approach Sun and Ocean most closely when they are brought together in concert. The Twins no longer gambol after Sun through Sky, and yet they still bring us clarity and comfort every day. Salt, Citrus, and Seaweed still affect the way that we live our daily lives, for our entire lives.

And then there will always be the unsettled question of Blood.

The Reunion of Kofi and Koko

Although the celestial siblings had diffused down into the world, finding themselves to be infused throughout living nature, a palpable sense of their personal spirits still hovered over the domains where they were found, such as Salt and Seaweed in ocean, Citrus in fruit, and Blood in bodies.

Born of a single sunbeam, Kofi and Koko were sundered from the days spent romping together through Sky with Sun, feeling most keenly the loss that followed doggedly on the heels of Change, harboring in themselves a kindred drive to be reunited. Much the same as the People needed salt to crystallize their memories, a deep desire to be brought together lived on in the Peoples as sentimental, ritual cravings for coffee and cocoa. Early mornings and late evenings continued to be devoted to seeking out clarity and comfort.

The sympathies of magic kept the spirits of the Twins apart as nature was subject to its own demands, where different biomes summoned different vitalizing souls. Kofi was drawn into the heart's breath of the highlands, where thin air and cool mists clarified their obsidian bitterness, and well-drained rainfall led to maturity over time. Koko was warmly embraced by the dense, humid shadows of the lower forests, where in perpetually wet heat they filtered sunlight into their comforting sweetness.

As the spirits of the Twins continued to root downward and grow upward, branching into the first coffee and cacao trees, they drew increasingly thin and found themselves being pulled from one another. All too soon, Kofi whispered their clear insight in a brittle voice, "Life is change." Koko rumbled in soft comfort, "Life is the same." "Change is the same," they said together as they faded in unison.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

No longer could they race together with Sun through Sky, but life is motion, so they flowed instead through the waking and sleeping dreams of those who tended their trees and consumed their beans. Kofi infused the inspiration of dawn into the hopes of the highland farmers, while Koko folded contemplative comfort into the evening sighs of the lowland growers. Generation upon generation, those who cultivated coffee and cocoa learned to read the elusive messages that were ferried by leaf and fruit, slowly coming to understand the symbols of the Twins whom they loved.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

As Kofi's cherries dried in the bright light of Sun, Kofi's pods fermented under the shade of banana leaves. The cultivators made real their insistent ymages of roasting, where fire released the most intense flavors. That sharing of ritual brought the spirits of the Twins to yearn for each other all the more deeply.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

As the People grew, different peoples met each other. Under even higher canopies, coffee came to provide shade for cocoa. The dreams of farmer and grower started to blend. One season, a woman who was particularly learned in the symbolism of fruit and leaf, cherry and pod, read the plants around her and suddenly felt overcome by a clear and comforting sensation akin to being visited by her children after a long absence. She ran home swiftly over Earth, under Sun and Sky, burning with the need to make her imagination real as day was stretching to reach night.

As she had a thousand mornings before, she ritually prepared her coffee and drank it for clarity, although this time she also made a cup for Kofi; likewise, as she had a thousand evenings before, she ritually prepared her cocoa and drank it for comfort, although this time she also made a cup for Koko. Over the fire, in a pot, she combined the two cups that she had made for each of the Twins, blending their essence together.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

Lifting the pot from the fire, pouring herself a mug and drinking, Moka felt both vitalized and soothed. Clarity and comfort combined for her. The Twins rose in joy from Steam into Sky with Sun, wherein they danced together, balancing time in a Moment that would not last.

Because life is change. And yet life is the same. So change is the same.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

Ever since that day, people have continued to explore different ways to reunite the Twins. There are those among us who seek to achieve an equal balance, and yet others who prefer to let one Twin lead. And yet others add fermented waters of life. Whereas some people have preferences that change, for others they stay the same.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

With this Story I answer your question, child of my own:

Where does mocha come from?

Ko the Sun smiles so very brightly on those who help their children to play together. In reuniting the Twins, we bask in the unity of the sunbeam that bore them, living our dreams in wakefulness and sleep, warming ourselves in the clarifying comfort of Love.

And then there will always be the unsettled question of Blood.

Speak of Salt and Seaweed

Long before the first word was uttered, deep within the time before time, Sa the Ocean dreamed in languid colors while Ko the Sun danced in festive serenity, both of them sparkling facets of the Unknowable from whose being burgeoned all plausibilities. The depths of Ocean graciously hosted the vast and ageless memory of every form that might exist, while Sun's radiance gave life to those myriad entities, each in its turn, as endless and without repetition as golden ϕ .

Oft have you been told the Story of the Six Scions...

(Yes, yes, I know that it is your very favoritest, but not right now. Listen first...)

Oft, so very oft indeed, I say, have you been told the Story of the Six Scions, when Ko wept with joy to see Kofi and Koko at play, whose tears of light welled into Ocean's waiting waters. In those merry molten drops, Ocean recognized the wedding of memory and meaning - just as joy is the revelation of love made manifest. From this mingling was born Salt, called also Saline and Sal, s/he who holds within their crystalline patterns the power to preserve all such recognitions, all minded moments when meaning emerges from memory.

Salt swiftly dispersed with purpose through Ocean's waters, lavishing fanciful forms on formerly formless reminiscences, coalescing the pretty patterns of the first Stories.

What a marvelous day that was! And yet there was more to come.

There are some who say that Seaweed emerged from Ocean's gratitude to Salt, for without Salt's coalescent gift of preservation, Ocean's majestic, ymagistic memory would have remained rilly susurrus and slip-slidey, cryptically obscure, a fuzzy dream realm forever in search of wakened dreamers... longing for those who could finally give rising life to the Land of Wake Believe.

Then there are those who say that Salt, lost and lonely in their crystal caverns, called out for a sibling who could lend them fluidity and change.

Because life is change. And yet life is the same. So change is the same.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

This you remember.

And there are yet others who say that both are true... those who are sitting right behind you. Friends of Blood. They know who they are.

All that we know for sure is that time began that day with the onset of ourstory. So there is a Story that is able to tell us what really happened, thus...

By and by, Ocean came to wonder at these nascent narratives, and to ponder over sole Salt, whereupon the notion beset their heart that more was needed than just lonesome preservation - Salt and the Stories needed the company of Someone Else.

As eventide rolled in, and Ko's light softened into contemplative reflection, Ocean united all that they had newly remembered about meanings mingling, and firmly planted frondy feelers across the seabed. From this swaying forest arose Seaweed, gentle and profound. Seaweed vigorously propagated waves over Salt's structured memormyscape, and together they showed Stories how to create new meanings from their communicative communion, weaving their flow into one another like tapestried currents.

What a marvelous day that was! And yet there was more to come.

Salt and Seaweed remained as close as the Twins, for memory and meaning cannot exist apart. Salt may rise as spray or sink as crystal, while Seaweed may drift with the currents or root in the depths, but always they return to each other in Ocean's bosom.

(Oh, for pity's sake. Let's say Ocean's *embrace*, then. Is that better? Good, now *shush*.)

When the People first learned to harvest salt from seawater, they discovered that food preserved with salt conveyed not just sustenance but remembrances of things past - the taste of elder seasons, the hopeful glow of once-and-future abundance when life was lean. Likewise, when they gathered seaweed, it taught their meals to grow new stories and rituals and memories of home and comfort, bringing forth a richness of ymagery that had been lightly sleeping just below the surfaces of familiar foods.

But the most moving mysticism changed their lives when the People invited salt and seaweed to live together.

Because life is change. And yet life is the same. So change is the same.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

This you remember.

In the fusion of preservation and transformation, their memories and meanings breathed in unison and counterpoint, just as Salt and Seaweed transpire, just as Sun and Ocean respire, each reflecting the other's nature. Our wisest cooks tell us that salt encourages food to remember what it was, all while seaweed helps it to ymagine the many meals that lie ahead, where together they animate a feast that embodies both our pasts and our plausibilities.

All of the time, ever since there has *been* time, in the waters where salt and seaweed mingle, new upon new upon new Stories clamor to tell themselves. Ocean dreams them, Sun quickens them, Salt preserves them, and Seaweed moves them, all helping the Stories to wave and weave. Every time that you partake of their essences together, now that there *is* time, you are savoring the very beginning of language, the first meeting of memory and meaning in the ymagination of the Unknowable.

What a marvelous day this was! And there is only a little more to come.

(Yes, yes, you have been very patient. What a good listener you have been!)

With this Story I answer your question, child of my own:

Where do stories come from?

When you abide a while closely, near the languorous lapping of the waves upon the shore, you will hear - to this very day - Salt and Seaweed whispering to the Stories, stirring in Ocean the new old ways to recall, and the new old ways to mean. For while their other siblings dwell in sky and shadow, shrub and sharp, these two remain always in the waters of their home, cycling memory to meaning to memory, embraced by Ocean, saying coyly to La the Moon, "Draw close for another Story," then, "Go mull that one over for a while."

Over and over and over.

And then there will always be the unsettled question of Blood.

Curious Citrus Shift

You must listen ever the more closely now, for this Story rides upon prismatic facets of light, some ruddy with laughter and others pale with apprehension. There are those who say that it is too sharp a tale to tell in the gloaming, but those who know - those who *truly* know - say that twilight is precisely when it must be told.

When Ko the Sun brought their six scions into the world - yes, it is your favorite, I know - each of them embodied an individual manner of being. You well remember how the Twins sprang forth together, how Salt meandered out from joy's tears in Ocean, and how Seaweed floated up from the mingling of memory and meaning.

But what of Citrus? We have yet to speak of the sour sib. Oh, how fiercely did Citrus burst from Sun's laughter, liberating lightning, a lightening libation of the blazing heart. Fearlessly they rode along rainbow trails, emotions evoking choruscations of color, ripples of transformative change. Their birth was all blazing brightness and keen wonder, the swift shock of delight at suddenly feeling most acutely *alive*.

And yet every moment must shift. As Citrus swiftly arced along variegated roads, they soon encountered their curiosity, and it was purely piqued. In every place that their feet fell, every path over which they would pass, a fostering change materialized. Fruit richly ripened, then ripened further still, streaming from a familiar sweetness into something altogether new and heady, disinhibiting... intoxicating. Grain dampened and rusted, releasing a wildness that had been feebly bound. Wherever Citrus tarried, life sprung a-fee, and even honey - yes, innocent, virtuously delectable honey - would foment ferment and release shrouded, hoarded truths from out the hearts and mouths of the People.

What a marvelous discovery this was! And yet there was more to come.

Citrus was intently, minutely fascinated by these metamorphoses, these conversions that were sparked by their electric, incendiary influence. They showered the People with ymages of color as they gathered around the translation of fruits and grains into other meaningfully incoherent messages, their laughter echoing Sun's own, their spirits lightly lifting up in a bright mirror of Citrus' awakening. Further and further would the sour child pour wanton potency into such ferocious recreations, and then just as swiftly sombering and sobering as the same torrid substances that imbued unfettered joy next curdled in the belly, rose up as bile, and turned celebration into regret.

Citrus lived and learned both excess and austerity, wild swings of the spectral pendula, and came to be wound rather loosely around moderation and balance.

Because life is change. And yet life is the same. So change is the same.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

This you remember.

There are those who say that it was Salt who taught Citrus how to preserve these moody, modal shifts, capturing ranges of moments when sharp brightness becomes a memory to be shared. Then there are those who say that it was Seaweed who showed Citrus how to flow these releases into meaning, to make them part of the Stories told by the People. And then there are yet others who sit in shadow (yes, those very ones behind you, Friends of Blood), those who whisper that it was another sibling who led Citrus to welcome and parade the entirety of the spectrum of their nature.

As you have seen, every rainbow has its two tails on the ground, and at its outer edge, where Citrus's bright path fades into twilight, yet other wondrous changes await. The wisest of the brewers and vintners among us instill their fermentations as the sun sets, when the sour scion cruises the border between illumination and shade, between wine and vinegar, between milk and cheese, between laughter and bile. We need them *all*.

That sharp taste upon your tongue, the gift of sour Citrus, reminds you that change does not happen *to* us, but rather that we *are* change. We *are* difference. We grow. We ripen. We ferment. We feast. We lament. We cycle and circle, wheels within wheels. We bravely ride the rainbow through the empires of Was, Is, and Maybe.

What a marvelous teaching this was! And yet the best is yet to come.

With this Story I answer your question, child of my own:

Why do things have to change?

There are those who say that Citrus still flies across the rainbow, alighting here and there to engender change with their motion. There are others who say that Citrus now prefers the twilight edge where sharp meets shadow, where Is meets Maybe. And then there are those, namely your Friends here (and yes, you can rest against your siblings now), who have long listened to the lessons of Citrus...

Life is change. And yet life is the same. So change is the same.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

This you remember, precious one.

And now, as the rainbow fades in twilight, and I change from Ko towards La, the time for *your* Story ripens, and we shall speak of transmogrifications that flow viscid, both bright and dark.

And then there is always the unsettled question of Blood, each and every time, answered in turn with the next Story.

And that is exactly as it should be, my child.

The Flow of Blood

Abide a while with me, my splendid child, and listen well as the last light fades. Your Friends have lived so very many Stories into being, and have heard so very many more from me. They are patient and kind, your sibs.

(Hm? Yes, even Citrus. Now *shush*.)

This Story, though - *your* Story - they harbor in the magic marrow of their boisterous bones. It is the sheer and sincere Story that you have always fathomed in the asking rather than the telling.

When Ko the Sun brought their six scions into the world, the first five were ushered into lustrous light - the Twins from a single sunbeam, Salt from tears of loving joy, Citrus from laughter's lightning, and Seaweed from Ocean's translucent compassion. And then you, my questioning one, heralded from the Edge of Dreams, in the moment before I turned from day to night, from Ko to La. You thundered in with a low, rumbling hunger that was clearer than sunbeams, older than joy, swifter than lightning, and more intimate even than empathy.

(Yes, Kofi, *and* balder than eagles. You're not helping. Blood was quiet during *your* Stories, so just you settle down.)

Blood, your elder sibs gave their generous gifts to the needful People - clarity and comfort, preservation and transformation, the mingling of meanings. But you are the bearer of the *fundamental* gift, the one that makes all other gifts possible: Hunger.

Hunger is the need of all needs, the one that compels us to seek, to question, to steadfastly pursue that which sustains us.

Your scattered sibs dwell in fruit and leaf, in crystal and current. But you, my Blood, you stalk through muscle and bone, through sinew and heart. You are the flavor that gives vibrant voice to life itself, the sacred taste that reminds us that we are quickened creatures of factual flesh. Bright-and-early death is wrawling wrought that we might live. So we must *choose*.

This hunger enigma measures and divides the People. Many tend the gardens of your siblings - the coffee and cacao groves, the salt flats, the seaweed beds, the fermenting fruits. Such homes enjoy the privileges of substantial sun and rolling rainfalls - they have always lived in lavish light. And others have *you* to look to, saved by the herd and the hunt, the path of predator and prey. In their homes, they enjoy less luxury of choice,

as the life-giving light must be stashed and cached, dutifully hoarded and treasured in the blood for much of the year.

Both ways are true. Both ways are hungers, pursuing the balance that holds between the empires of Was, Is, and Maybe.

Because life is change. And yet life is the same. So change is the same.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

This you have always known, well beyond memory.

And this is why you, my Blood, of all my children, never stop asking *why*.

There are those who say that you were born red because you carry the sun's last light within you. There are others who say that it is because you make us face the truth of hunger, that the price of life is death. And yet there are still others who truly know (yes, all of those holding you now) that you glow red from the banked fires within, burning questions that are the hungers that keep us seeking, keep us moving, keep us alive.

Light is light, and darkness heavy. You are the responsible one, the one with the burden, the one with the shoulders. And so today, on your birthday, we all hold you.

Chorus: *We all hold you.*

When they were still children, your siblings would ask me why there is snow, or how Rabbit got its ears, or why their sib was being a ding-dong, or what 'bosom' means. And yes, I am looking at you, Koko. But you, my child, where has *your* childhood been?

Why must we choose our ways?

Why must life feed on life?

Why must things change?

It is for *you* to question each spilled drop of blood, each caged animal, each ravaged plant, each struggling life taken. Each and every instance you must weigh against its need, its purpose. You must consider each and every hunt and harvest. Blood is the heart. Blood is the balance.

What a marvelous revelation this is! And yet there is always more to ask.

This is why you were born at the Edge of Dreams, my questioner, my Blood. For it is in that twilight space between Is and Maybe that all great seekers roam. You bring the questions that give meaning to all gifts.

With this Story I answer the question you have always asked:

Why must I always question?

There are those who say that you still stalk the shadows, testing the boundaries between what we *can* do and what we *should* do. There are others who say that you flow through every heart that beats, every mind that wonders, every soul that seeks. And yet there are others still (yes, all those Friends who question with you) who know that *you are yourself* precisely when you are asking *why*, when you are making us remember that every choice has a cost, that every life has value, that every moment asks us to balance what we need against what we can give.

Because life is change. And yet life is the same. So change is the same.

Cycles and circles. Wheels within wheels.

This you have always known, my questioner, my child.

And now, as you rest against those who love you, perhaps you begin to see why your questions have no final answers. For each answer simply leads to the next question, each revelation to the next mystery.

And that is exactly as it should be.

For you are Blood who will one day be the Sun, the ultimate Light.

And then there will always be the unsettled question of Blood.

That is your gift to us all.

Au Revoir

There are those who say
 that the Story ends
There are others who say
 that the Story begins
And yet there are others still who know
 that every Story swallows its rainbow tail.

Sun to Blood
Moon from Sun
Blood to Sun

Because life is change
And yet life is the same
So change is the same

Cycles and circles
Wheels within wheels
This you remember

So rest now
 with those who hold you
 in the Edge of Dreams
 where all Stories hunger
 waking to feed
 on new questions

Again

And then there will always be the unsettled question of Blood.