

Transcendence
By Jaden Cohen

My ascension was quiet. One moment I was mortal. The next I was not.
Within the first moments, I became aware of something beyond this frail world I had toiled for so long in.
I became aware of another.
And another.
And another.
And another.
They stretched on for as far as I could sense.
And I could *sense*.
Ever being within them was clear as day.
I sensed countless versions of my wife.
Countless version of my children.
Countless version of my disciples.
Countless version of...me.
I looked up and I saw more.
I looked down and I saw more.
The small crowd of family and friends watched nervously as I slowly surveyed the new world that had become available to me.
They watched me, and I watched them. Countless versions of them.
They loved, they fought, they lived and they died.
At first, I intervened.
Stretching my will across worlds, across universes in desperation. And for every one I saved infinitely more died.
I growled softly, leveraging more of my being to reach further, reach deeper.
I was transcendent, a being beyond time and space, the universe, no the multiverse, would bend before me.
The further I reached, the more different things became. It was subtle at first, a different hair style. A new dress.
Then more severe.
People ceased to exist, history changed.
But it was still recognizable.
I recognized with growing awareness and horror, that this was not because I was reaching all of the realities parallel to mine. No, those were infinite. I was simply changing the... direction of my reaching, if a plane of infinite dimension even possessed something as rudimentary as "directions."
I changed my reach, withdrawing from the divergent planes and diving deeper and deeper into those that resembled my own.
More life, more death.

I grew at a rate far beyond.
I was unbound by the laws of space and time.
It simply didn't matter.
More life, more death.
I spend an eternity in a single moment.
Finally, I stood before another version of my family.
I sighed. I snapped.
A wave of my hand erased them from space-time.
The blood was on my hands either way.
More infinities passed.
I simply...existed.
I destroyed. I created.
Words could no longer describe me.
I...was.
Eventually, over a time beyond mortal comprehension, I grew bored.
I wondered what would happen if I rose, instead of dove.
So I did.
New worlds opened up to me as my senses expanded, blips of excitement before the crushing certainty of knowledge rendered them mundane.
I sighed, rising further.
Perhaps, somewhere out there, there was another.
Another who simply was.
Universes were remade in my wake.
I no longer cared.
Higher and higher I rose, the universes below me becoming more varied as I went, more different from the universe I had once called home.
I flew higher.
And higher.
Higher.
Would it ever end?
It seemed like at any moment I could burst through the clouds, and gaze upon the entirety of existence.
But I knew it was an illusion.
It would never end.
So I did the only thing I could.
I rose.
Eventually, I stopped, gazed upon a new cluster of worlds, as marred and worn as the rest.
I settled down, watching them as they lived.
Watching them as they died.
I did nothing.

Either way, the blood was on my hands.

Infinity passed.

I was so bored.

I remembered the times when I was small, when I was mortal.

I could hardly conceive of such a concept, but I tried.

I remember the excitement of the unknown, the meaning and validation in emotion.

The bliss of ignorance.

I wished I could return.

So I closed my eyes.

And dreamt of a smaller existence.