

Set it Free

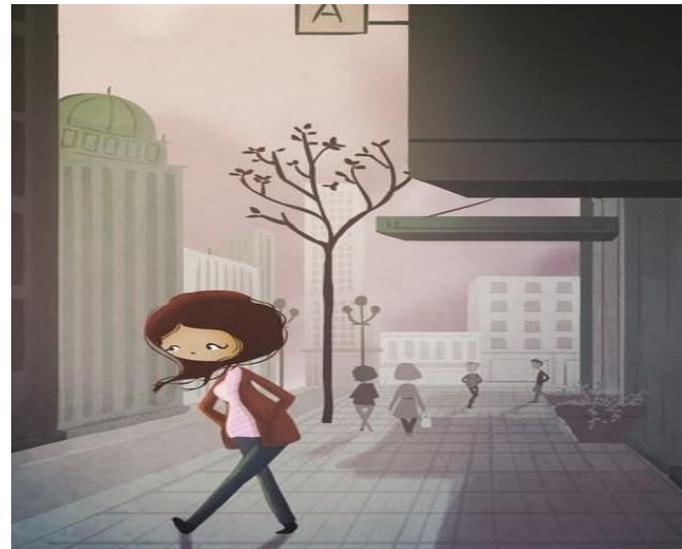
By Daniela Toloza

The day Ava's sister died, she didn't cry. Not that day, or in the next 12 months. She blamed the weather. This had been the biggest drought in decades. The air was warm and sticky at night, and during the day the sun burnt every crop and dried every river that its rays touched.



Hence she thought 'How could I cry my heart out when Mother Nature is struggling to call into existence a single drop of rain?' It just felt wrong. Besides, Ava didn't feel the need to mourn the death of her sister. Literally. Her body just wasn't responding according to the situation.

However, she didn't mull over about it and carried on with her overworked life. Ava worked extra hours; she covered her colleagues and even took night shifts. And when she was free, she exercised and did the housework. She wasn't eating very well and was barely sleeping. As a consequence, one morning at work Ava passed out. Her boss forced her to take a few days to recover at home. She accepted... reluctantly.



Once at home, alone with her thoughts, she wanted to sing to herself, and it was then that she realized her voice was gone! She panicked and took some pills, but they didn't work. Desperate, she started hyperventilating. Looking for some air, she lied on the floor sobbing in silence while an

enormous pain spread throughout her body. 'This is it', she thought, while closing her eyes.



The clock struck three in the morning while outside a gale was blowing. The wind found its way inside Ava's house, opening every window and howling all around until it finally reached her ears: 'There's a storm inside of you, set it free', the wind blew.

The whisper had the same vibration as her sister's voice. Somehow, deep down those words made sense to her. Stumbling, she made it outside the house to then fall on the dry leaves.



She opened her mouth expecting no sound, but surprisingly her voice started raising. Slowly, the scream turned into a thunder. Tears poured through her eyes and became the much desired rain. The sadness was out of her once and for all. Smiling, Ava let the rain embrace her as an old friend. Ultimately the storm hit the city. It was the first rain in a year.



The End