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My old Soul

by Sue Thompson

I have this memory. I think I dream about it sometimes. But I am not sure if it is a dream or a memory, my thoughts merge into one.

I know things. Things that no one else knows.

I have tried talking to my mother but she doesn't listen. She tells me to stop making things up.

But I know I have been here before. I know places, places that I have never been to in this body.

My dreams tell me a story of another life, long ago. Another mother, another father, different siblings. I am not saying I love this new family less I just had another one. I miss them sometimes. I meet them in my dreams and they tell me they are well. That I must live this new life. It is hard to understand why I am here again.

One day my new mother and I were on a bus and I pointed to a shop, it was an old building, built with wooden beams and was leaning slightly. I said I had lived there, but she just told me not to be ridiculous. But I knew that I had lived there, with my other parents, I had a brother and a sister; my brother had red hair, he worked with my father as a cordwainer, my sister was older than me and so helped our mother with the cooking and washing. We even had a servant.

I asked my 'now' mother why we didn't have a servant and she laughed at me. I heard her telling my father later, I heard their mocking laughter.

These memories come and go, but when I dream I am there in my other home. I was happy. I sometimes close my eyes and try to imagine I am back there in that house, the fire burned all day and I can smell the broth cooking on the stove. There was always so much laughter in that house.

As I have gotten older the memories of my other life blur and become muddled, I cling onto them not wanting to forget. I have taken the bus back to my house, I got off the bus and stood outside, I can feel what it is like within; I can see my other mother sitting by the fire reading to me. I can even hear my 'then' families' voices within those walls.

I have learnt not to mention these memories or dreams to my 'now' family. Instead I hold them in my mind and treasure them.

I lie in bed waiting for sleep to overcome me so that I can be with my old family.

And when I wake I have the memories locked up in my mind, only I can access them.

My secret life.

But as I get older the memories begin to drift further away, when I wake my dreams are hazy.

The old family are being lost and my new family are my current reality.

My old soul is almost dead.