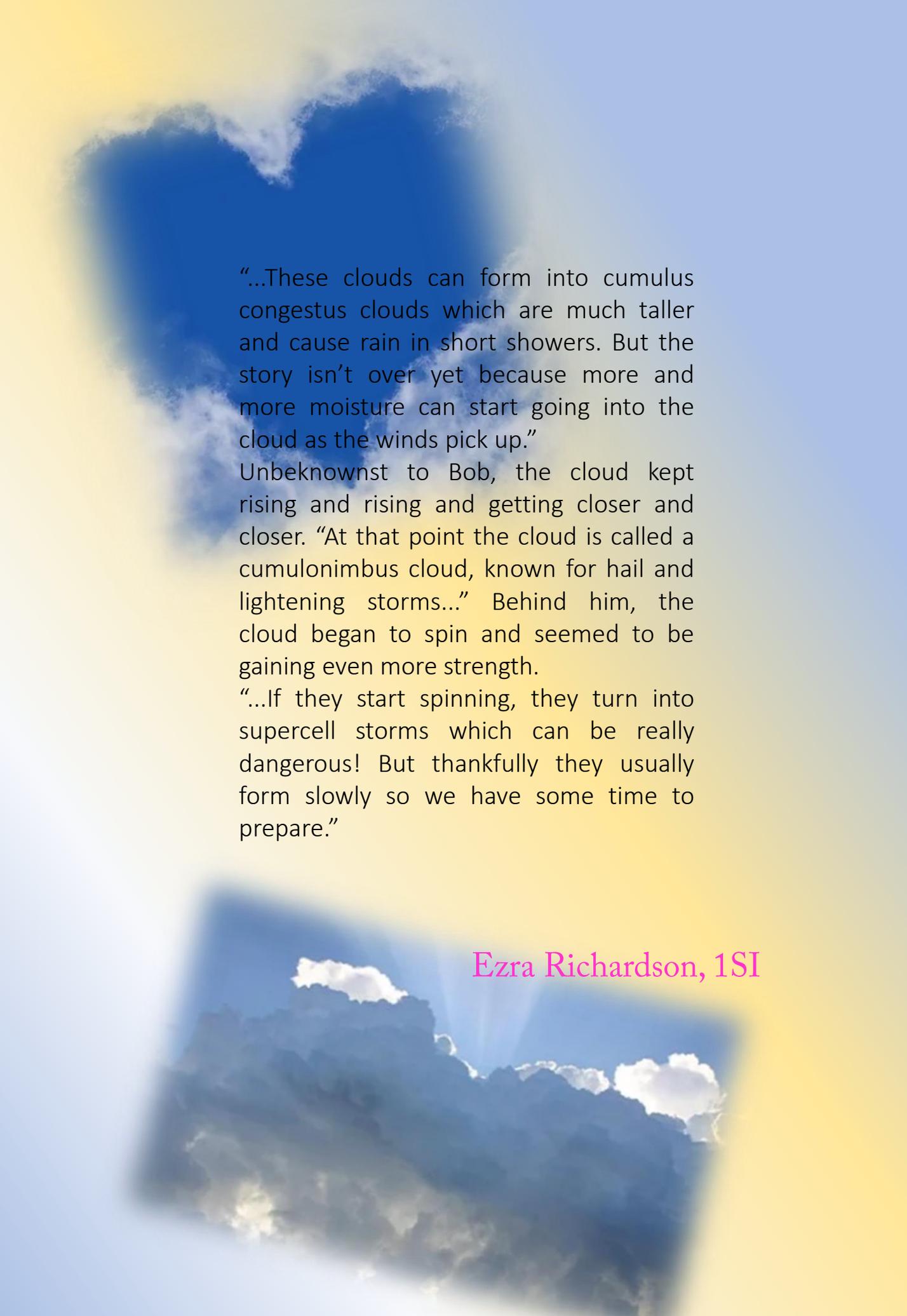


Sunny with a Chance of Golf Balls

Bob got out of The Weather Channel van at his local Florida beach, excited to do his presentation on TV. “Hello, my name is Bob from The Weather Channel. Have you ever wondered where those massive storms that seem to appear out of nowhere come from? Like today for example, there isn’t a cloud in the sky yet a storm is supposed to show up soon!” Indeed the horizon was as cloudless as can be over the Florida beach.

“You would think they would commence in special or rare circumstances, but in reality it’s quite different. You see, it all begins with a warm-rising column of air which brings moisture. This cloud is called a cumulus cloud and they are incapable of raining. So what do they have to do with the massive storms? The answer is everything...”

Unknowingly, as he was speaking, behind him a small little puffy cloud was forming over a barrier island and that small cloud was getting taller and taller.



“..These clouds can form into cumulus congestus clouds which are much taller and cause rain in short showers. But the story isn’t over yet because more and more moisture can start going into the cloud as the winds pick up.”

Unbeknownst to Bob, the cloud kept rising and rising and getting closer and closer. “At that point the cloud is called a cumulonimbus cloud, known for hail and lightening storms...” Behind him, the cloud began to spin and seemed to be gaining even more strength.

“..If they start spinning, they turn into supercell storms which can be really dangerous! But thankfully they usually form slowly so we have some time to prepare.”

Ezra Richardson, 1SI

The Fay and the boy

Back in the days when there was still magic and humans were full of hope and dreams, lived extraordinary creatures who we nowadays would have called “Fays.” One of them, a ravishing nymph, was living in a meadow surrounded by oak trees, with butterflies as her only company.

She longed for adventures and to see other landscapes than trees. If she could, she would have left her meadow a long time ago, however, Mother Nature had other plans for her: the fay was part nymph part oak. The top half of her body was human-like so she could see, hear, talk and move her arms freely. However, everything below her waist was stuck to the bark of the tree although the shape of her legs was defined.

Time passed and nothing changed. The Nymph was still in the protective grasp of the trunk, dreaming about life on the other side of the woodland, yet not being able to imagine it. She liked to think that the world was some kind of a paradise where everything was balanced and living in harmony. She didn't know Humans existed or other races for that matter, but hoped that someone like her might be somewhere, willing to communicate.

In a village not so far away from the woods lived a young man who had just reached adulthood. Even though he appeared as a dashing man, he still had the wonder and the heart that are so common for young boys. One day, Adrien, as he was called, while strolling at the edge of the woods, noticed a butterfly in the corner of his eyes. Before it could disappear, Adrien stopped to catch it and thus, headed toward a meadow.

It was a sight to behold. There was a peaceful vibe as thousands of butterflies were flying freely. However, what caught the eye of Adrien was a peculiar Oak tree from which came a beautiful voice. That's when he met her. He was so mesmerized by her beauty and she was so flabbergasted by his sudden appearance, that none of them dared to talk. After a few seconds or minutes, they both slowly started to regain their composure. Adrien felt the need to introduce himself and as he reached out his hand and pronounced his name, he realized the peculiar appearance of the fair lady. The maiden didn't seem to notice as she herself was staring at his legs in wonder.

When it seemed that the Nymph was not going to take his hand, the young man took hers and laid chaste kiss on it. By now, she was blushing furiously as she didn't understand the meaning of this polite gesture. Surprisingly, she knew that the information coming from the gentleman's lips was what he called himself. This made her wonder; did she have a name? A frown grazed her features when she realized she had none. Adrien started to feel anxious, did he insult her without knowing? She then said with a timid voice, like ashamed, that she had no first name nor last name. Feeling sorry for the Nymph, Adrien proposed to help her find one. A few hours later, Krysta, was the final choice. Unfortunately, the sun was beginning to set and Adrien found himself obliged to go home, however, he promised Krysta that he would visit her regularly.

And so he did, on a daily basis, for months. It became a habit for him to tell stories to Krysta about his world and each day she seemed more and more passionate about the outside, so much so that one day, she had enough of her condition and longed for freedom. How could she get out of her wooden prison though? The only possible way seemed to be to tear her from the bark.

“Here’s how we’re going to do it my love. Hold me tight and pull me toward yourself, with enough force, I might be finally free!” Krysta declared.

“Krysta dear, I cannot help but feel like it’s a bad idea, maybe we should reconsider? I don’t want to lose

you, I don’t mind the whole “being stuck to the bark of a tree” thing!” Adrien pleaded.

“I mind!” She roared. “I’m sick of being unable to go wherever pleases me! But more importantly I’m tired

of not being capable to be with you all the time, not sharing hugs and embraces!” Krysta’s display of emotions stirred Adrien’s heart, leaving him no choice but to agree. A gasp escaped her lips as she started to feel pain but she urged him to continue. What at first was a small discomfort turned to excruciating agony, tears were falling by now and the torture didn’t seem to stop. After one last harsh pull, a tearing sound could be heard as Krysta freed herself from the trunk. Now, no sound could be heard from the meadow and no butterfly was in sight. The Nymph tried to stand up on her legs but only managed to stumble a few steps before falling back into Adrien’s arms. Her lover already started to regret their decision as he saw the agonizing woman. Sadly, it was too late for regrets, if he had paid more attention to their surroundings, he would have realized that nature around them started to wilt. Decay now was taking place. The decomposition also appeared within Krysta, it was unnoticeable at first, but soon, her legs and arms started to wither, the rest of her body following. Alarmed, both hugged each other tighter like it could help Krysta to escape her fate.

It was no use, Krysta was gone and Adrien was kneeling on the ground holding nothing but air and a single butterfly who after caressing his cheek with its wings, fluttered away toward the sky until it disappeared from humans’ eyes.