

## The Crab Chair

...On an ordinary afternoon, too exhausted and brain fogged from oversleeping, I was struggling to get up when I decided to go for a wander around South Bermondsey, the neighborhood where I live. While staring at the asphalt beneath my feet, I was hoping for something under there to change, whether it was its colour or maybe its shape.

On my right side, a house stood out clear against the metallic trees that, almost touching the sky and serving as a palace for the birds, surrounded me. Its window had been left open and, curious as I am, I instantly felt like moving towards it. Ah, what did my eyes just see? A real wonder, a whole tribe holding each other in candid, spontaneous embraces. People and crabs alike, all enjoying a vacation that appeared to be stuck inside that flat.

To spy through the window felt erotic, but I wanted more. So I leaned out of it with my whole body which, up until then, was partially hiding behind the structure of the glass door. Two people approached me, joining their arms in a particular position that resembled a chair, and invited me to get on it. We exchanged no words, as the outside din was enough to destroy the sacred already. It was a matter of moments and I was warm, the sun caressing my skin like the gentle hand of a parent, in a tribe where summer seemed to have been captured for everyone to live through it inside that room. History was not made on vacation, they taught me in school, but that day I wanted to go on holiday as those cranes were fast enough that, everywhere I looked, there was nothing left but new pointless buildings.

I was moving around the room, the water splashing around yet not giving me any chills, with people ready to immerse themselves in marble tubs surrounded by crabs. One of those came up to me and said: "Water is a happy memory. It will help you forget about the metal trees standing outside of the window. As a child, I found crabs scary. Today, they keep me warm in summer. Playing like children in the water, we use our claws to cut the rusty branches hanging out there."

Two more approached me, joining their arms again so as to form a chair. They looked at me and invited me to sit on it. Where had I gone? It was a bright place that sought light, with sunlight illuminating the world while simultaneously neglecting the shadow that light carries within itself. In the past, sleeping until late felt like a ruse but right there I wondered, what had I missed so far?

I jumped on that arms-made chair and, a second after, I found myself suspended over a tub, ready to be immersed in water just like others had done before me. As they turned me upside down, my arms broke in the water first, followed by everything else. My limbs and trunk were getting stiffer and stiffer. All of the sudden, my arms were gone, now replaced by claws, just as gone was my human body. I watched myself re-emerge from water and found myself transformed. I was a crab now.

A man pulled me out of the tub, placing me on the edge of the window overlooking that distant horizon fully made of cranes. My claws were strong enough that all that metal didn't scare me anymore. The need to anesthetise myself so as not to suffer from the landscape out there had finally vanished, as these claws tasting like summer had given me the strength to react. So out of the window, as if from a sea rock, I jumped...