

The Excavator and The Weaver by M.M. Porter

The son of the blacksmith had always been in prison. There was no before or after, for him; there wasn't even a now. Not a now like you and I know. He just was in prison. The moon hadn't learned to spin and the sun hadn't performed a pirouette. This was because time had not yet been made.

The daughter of the cobbler was also in prison, the way one is imprisoned when nothing changes. The pair had no need of anything, and didn't really mind their prisons. Occasionally, the two would talk. It was only before, after, and between this talking that the pair decided that they didn't care much for prison anymore. The cobbler's daughter wanted to find a way out of their cells. The son of the blacksmith wanted to find a way to merge their cells.

He thought they would be content, if only they shared. Often, he would take his nail and scratch at the wall between them. The prison walls were skeptical of this, because the blacksmith's son was trying to change things. However, the rocks allowed such things, if only to breed a new contentment and stillness. And though, for us, nails against rock would take a lifetime to break, the son of the blacksmith had no such concerns. And thus, the cells became one, and they talked face-to-face, and space was born. Black and brilliant. Infinite.

But the daughter of the cobbler was not contented. She insisted there would be a way out. All this space had made her cold. Besides, If they could combine their walls, they could do other things. But nothing happened, and how could they escape if no dog with a key in its mouth came down the hallway? Or no guard fell asleep? Or no food was brought by a pitying kitchen servant?

So the daughter of the cobbler took the only thing that seemed to change, and started to braid. She pulled black hair from her head, and blond from the son of the blacksmith's head. With each hair she threaded together, she felt hope overtake her. She shaped their hairs patiently until they formed a stiff key. She placed it inside the lock through the bars, and turned the key. The son of the blacksmith was scared, but the bars were already opening. And as they stepped out, time began to unfold.