

Beginnings

By Jack Noble

By chance, we were in the same group. Her name was Anderson, mine Brady. Alphabetical chance.

There were six of us, but I only had eyes for her. "This museum is full of wonders," the guide said.

We were there to learn about evolution. Most of the children simply wanted to stare at dinosaurs.

"Evolution proceeds by incremental steps. This tiny fish is our direct ancestor."

I watched her expressions shift. Unease by the insect cases; awe beneath the blue whale; awkwardness when she caught me looking.

Not by chance, but by my own clumsy design, we stood side by side for the summation. "Who has a favourite exhibit?"

We shouted our answers. Four: "Dinosaurs!" She and I: "The blue whale!"

We shared a look. She smiled shyly. Our hands touched.

"Remember: from simple beginnings, beautiful, wondrous things may evolve."