

Suspended Without Wings

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When I was a boy, no doubt influenced by the superheroes of my boyish fictions, I dreamt of flying. I remember quite clearly an afternoon one mid-summer day when I tied one of my mother's dish towels around my neck to form a cape. So prepared, I leapt off the backyard deck with arms outstretched into the grassy lawn below, over and over again, thinking, feeling, believing that if I willed it with sufficient ardor that I might fly, that I *would* fly if only my faith was sufficient. It was a difficult lesson for a young boy to learn; that the immutable laws of physics – gravity – could not be overcome by even the most fervent dreams and wishes of fanciful youth. I know, there are balloons and airplanes and helicopters – but I wanted *wings*.





Whenever I see a ton or more of rocky earth suspended in mid-descent, I can't help but wonder how long it's been poised like that, or how long it will remain so. I know the pause is temporary — as is life — but wondrous while it lasts. There it is — the balance of a dancer, the strength of a giant — waiting, waiting, waiting — suspended without wings.



In my youth, gravity was something to conquer. As I matured, it was something to resist. Now I am beginning to realise that gravity is something to endure. The pull of gravity is strong, never wavering, never ceasing. The descent may be postponed, but eventually gravity wins. Gravity always wins. Gravity always, always, always, *always* wins. But maybe not today, not now, not this instant, but always, eventually. I may not fly, but I can leap, and for a moment become airborne, and in that moment find hope. Even gravity can be suspended.













My Christian friends inform me that we live in a fallen world. Well, perhaps *falling*, but not thoroughly fallen. Sometimes the descent is interrupted in a reprieve that allows us a pause. Could life itself be a moment of pause in the descent, a time for reflection, to look around us, to share and love and laugh against the gravity of the situation?

As G.K. Chesterton once mused, “Perhaps the angels fly because they take themselves lightly.” If I had only known that in my youth, if only I had laughed at gravity instead of struggling against it, the cape might have worked.





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