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## *The Shaman Comforts the Fledgling's Soul*

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Mythcon 51: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien  
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# The Shaman Comforts the Fledgling's Soul

by

Joseph Murphy

I descended beneath blood-spattered stone,  
Circling through root and star  
Until I reached the top-most limb;  
Found the fledgling's soul.

Strands of light uncoiled from my down.

I grasped them in my beak and built a nest  
No claw could reach.

The fledgling's soul answered my full-throated call  
As I placed it in the nest.

Sky-colored bark shimmered beneath my talons  
As the tiny soul's wings healed,  
Taking the bark's color.

As its strength grew, so did the reach of its dream:

It entered a seed  
Another's beak had cracked open.

Within string and twig-weave, an egg would be set;

Crest and wings sprout  
From the dream's furrows.

I promised to keep close by that fledgling  
Until its cloud-roads opened.