It’s kind of embarrassing, but when I was younger I used to climb on top of the pivot on my dad’s irrigation system. When there was a little breeze I’d throw my arms up in the air. It’s silly, but in those moments I imagined myself free. Almost as if I was flying.

From on top of the system, I could see for miles past the corn and alfalfa fields below me. The air around me smelled fresh, like the hay bales my older brother and I used to play in when we were younger. I felt so brave. With my little hands I was embracing the danger, I was gathering its strength.

If you could have only seen the shadow my little outstretched body made below.

When I was a little older my next found love was taking long walks in the country beside my house. One night I took my walk when the full moon was rising. The air had settled down to its purest state. By the time I was heading back up my driveway the moon was so bright it was casting shadows along the dirt roads. With my back against the moon, I was being made into one of them.

It’s strange to walk towards your shadow at night.

So often we’re scared to make ripples in the light. We’re scared to get into its way. We don’t always want to be stamped upon the ground where everyone can see. It’s a bit dangerous. A little uncomfortable.

I wonder if maybe sometimes we can learn more from children than we think. When they are still as sweet and pure as that evening air. Like when I was young, throwing my hands in the air on top of that irrigation system — when I was taking long walks to explore the country around me. It may be silly. It may be incredibly innocent.

It may remind us what we’ve forgotten along the way.

Make your own shadows. Make huge ones when you feel little. Make them even in the dark at night. When the possible surprises you. When you find yourself exploring a new landscape.

When the wind challenges you, open your hands in an embrace. Be big. Be brave. Stir the light into a shadow. Outstretch your arms and find your wings even when you look ridiculous.

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