



Linda's T'ai Chi Weekly Handout
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Where is Flaco?



Every good story, or at least many good stories, begin with the words, “once upon a time.” An article in the New York Times written by Michiko Kakutani, begins just that way. “Once upon a time, there was an owl named Flaco who lived in a small zoo in the middle of a big park in America’s largest city. His story is a cliffhanger about escape,

freedom and resilience.” How can you read an opening like that and not want to read further?

After a lifetime in captivity, Flaco, a Eurasian -eagle owl escaped when a vandal cut the wire mesh of his enclosure fled to the trees of New York City’s Central Park. The article continues.” Never before had the owl seen such wide-open spaces. Never before had he been harassed by squirrels, and noisy blue jays and streetwise crows. It was amazing to watch Flaco learn, said Molly Eustis, a stage manager and owl lover, and “think ‘wow this is probably the first time in his life he’s been that high up in a tree!’ and to think how that must feel for him. Or the first time he caught a rat! Or felt the rain falling all around him.” No one thought Flaco could survive such a traumatic event, But, so far, he has. And, to think that the Eurasian-eagle owl is not even native to North America but to Europe and Asia.



Flaco in a tree in Centra Park New York City

I don't know the intent of the vandals who cut the mesh that held Flaco within his enclosure. Perhaps it was the desire to set a caged bird free. Perhaps it was more sinister and nefarious- to send the owl to its death in an unknown environment or just to create chaos. Who knows?

What drew me to this story is the sheer fortitude and resilience of this bird. Its instincts and innate skills to hunt, fend off predators, to nest so strong he overcame this lack of experience in the real world.



Flaco New York City

The story of Flaco is inspirational. My hope is that each of you find the meaning of "Where is Flaco" within your own life and your own experience.

Peace and a solemn request to the universe for goodwill to all creatures of the world,
Linda



Flaco learns to live with the squirrels New York City