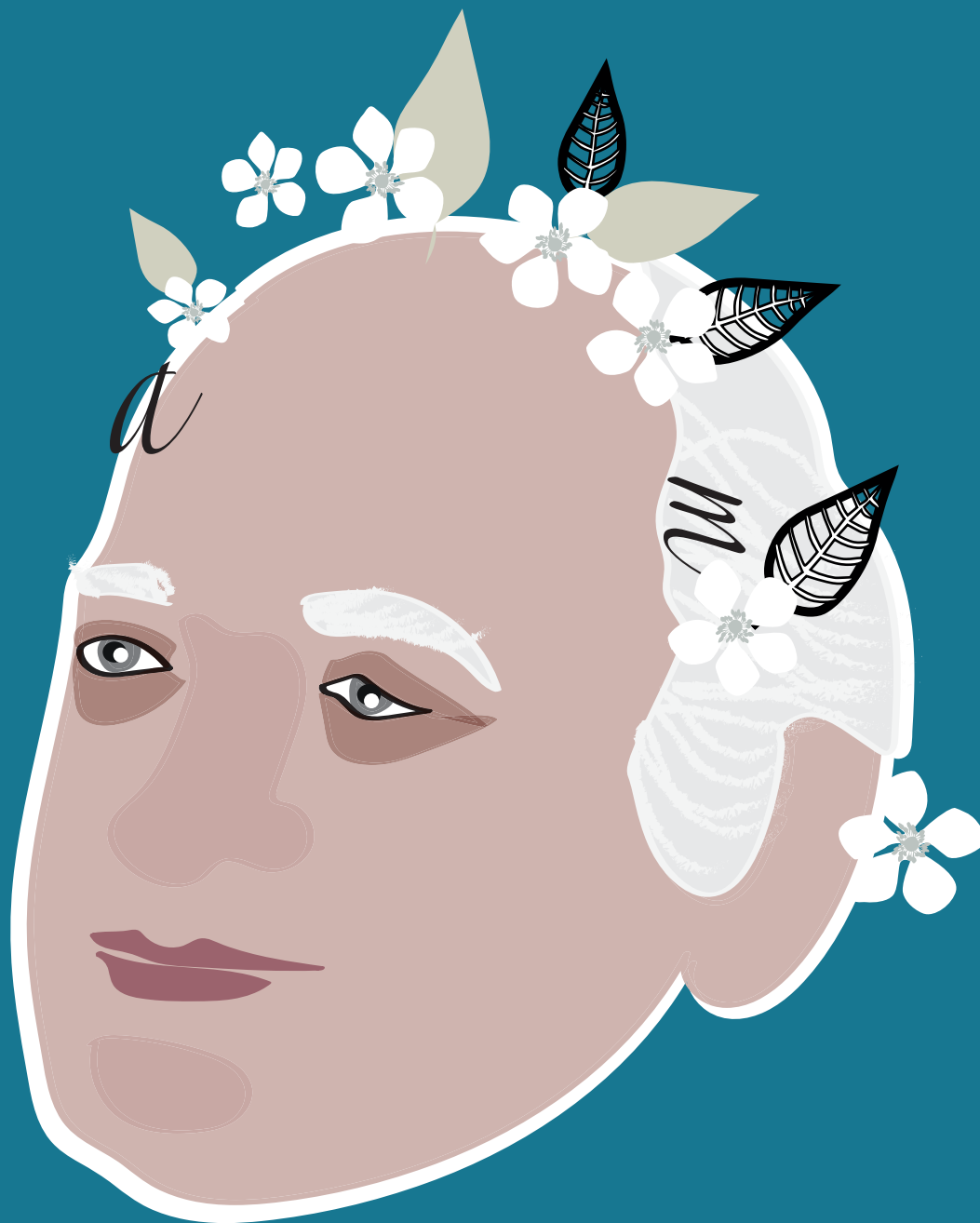


# BIOGRAPHY



HENRI COANDĂ



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# LIKE THE WIND

**CHARACTER:** HENRI COANDĂ

**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:** ROMANIA

**DATES:** Bucarest, 7 giugno 1886 / 25 novembre 1972

**HISTORICAL PERIOD:** 20th century

**SUMMARY:** Henri is a child who loves the wind. He loves it so much that he will dedicate his passion to engineering, leading to the invention and creation of airplanes.

**KEYWORDS:** KITE, WIND, AEROPLANE, CURLER

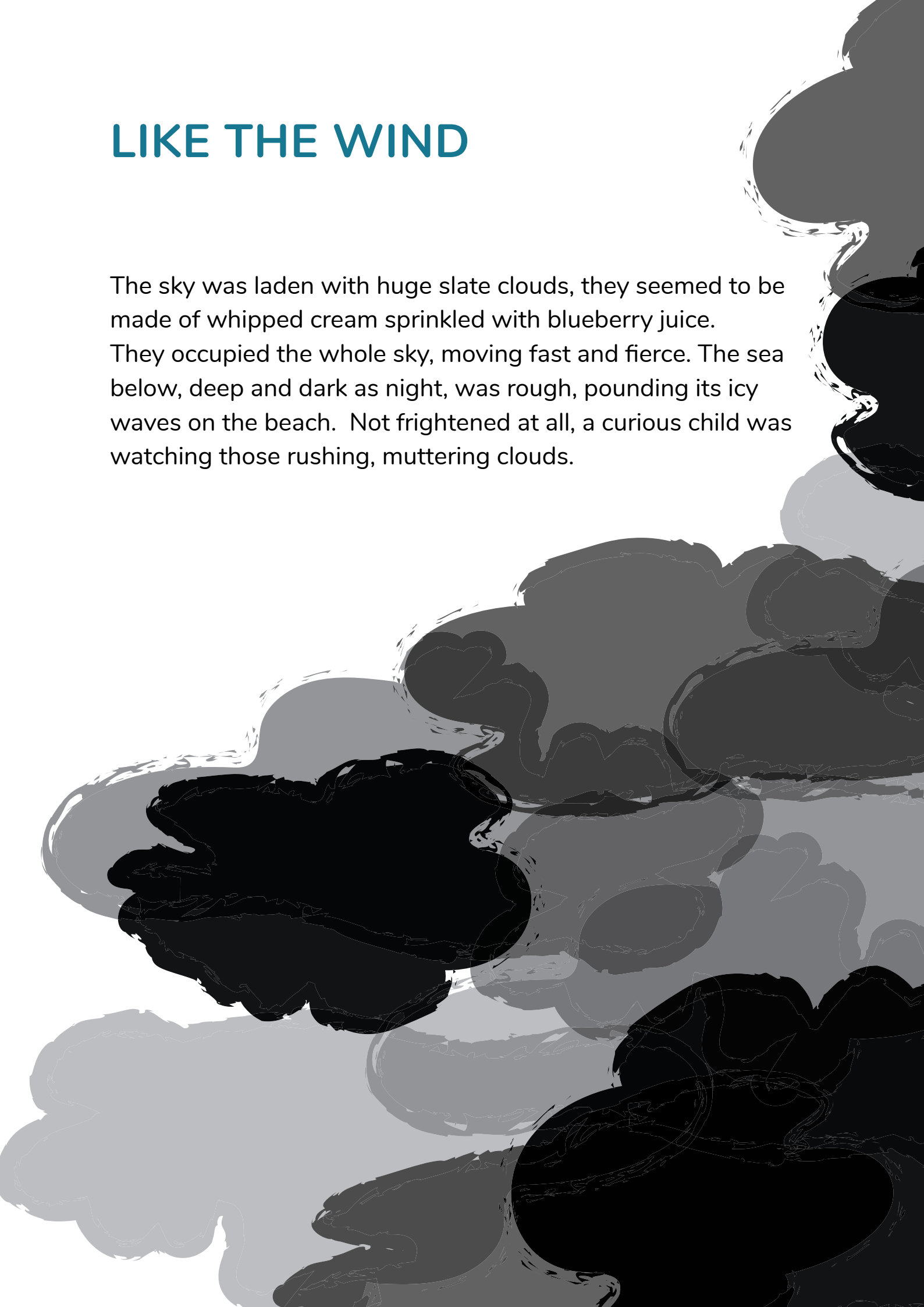
**GENRE:** BIOGRAPHY

**AGE:** 7 - 8 YEARS

**AUTHOR:** Barbara Lachi

# LIKE THE WIND

The sky was laden with huge slate clouds, they seemed to be made of whipped cream sprinkled with blueberry juice. They occupied the whole sky, moving fast and fierce. The sea below, deep and dark as night, was rough, pounding its icy waves on the beach. Not frightened at all, a curious child was watching those rushing, muttering clouds.



Suddenly the wind picked up and the waves and clouds seemed to start a whirling dance. The child's mouth drew an "O" of pure wonder and amazement.

"The wind is wonderful Dad," he said to a man nearby who was watching his movements.

"We must get back before it becomes dangerous" answered the man.

"I want to stay, I want to see!" said the child again opening his arms and hands to feel the wind pass through him as if he might take flight.

"No Henri, it is dangerous but I promise that tomorrow I will teach you a beautiful game that will help you play with your friend, the wind."

The man kept his promise and presented the child with paper, a string and some sticks. "What shall we do?"

"We will build a kite!"

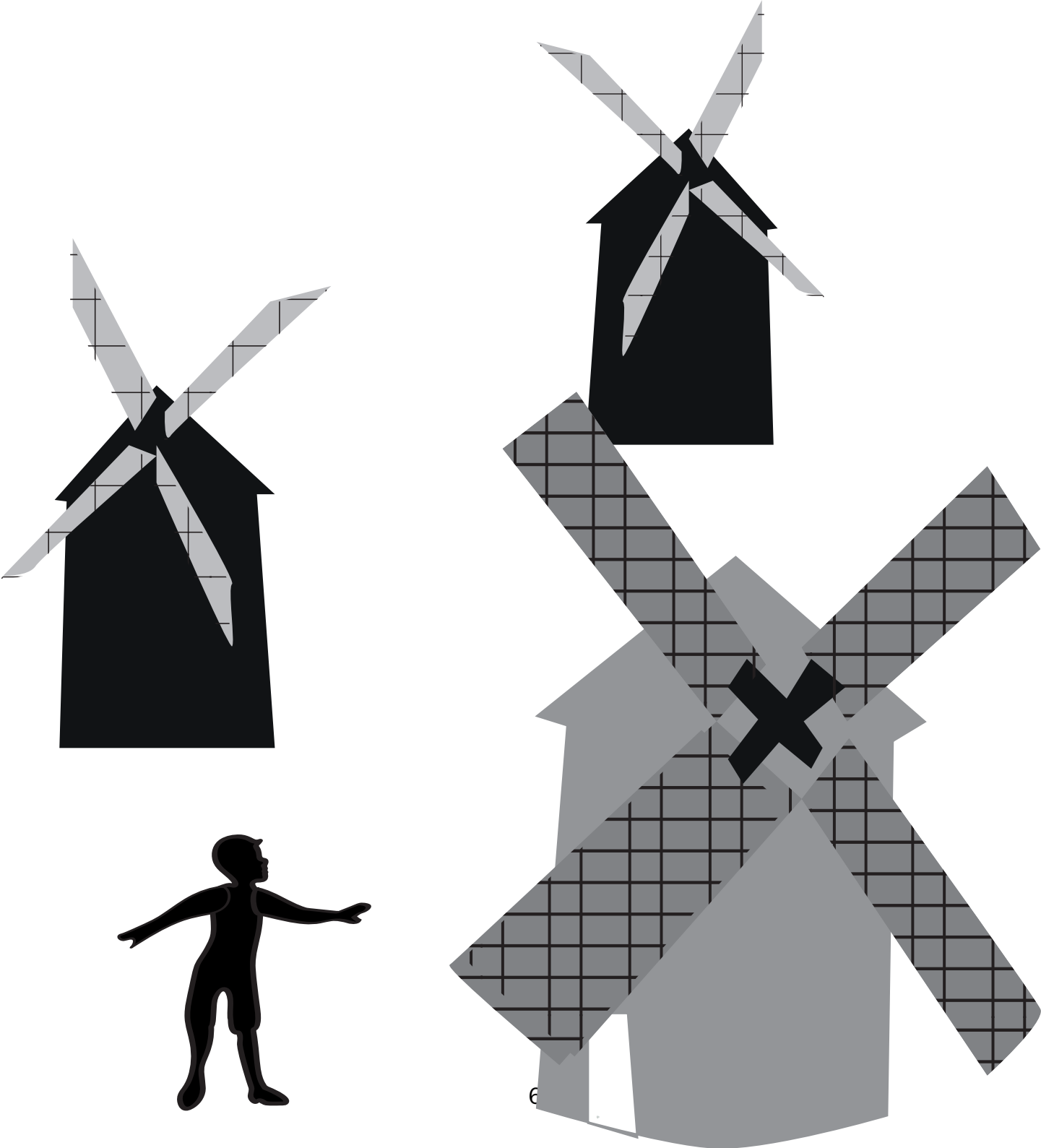
"A kite!" repeated little Henri out loud, so that he could remember that new word well, as he watched his father build that wonderful and mysterious object. As soon as it was ready, Henri rushed out and untied the kite: he saw it soar high up as if it were a living creature, pulling, tugging, seeming to want to fly free.

"I want to fly too!" repeated Henri, shrieking full of happiness.





From that day on, wind, kites, windmills, and everything of the sort became his passion. He would spend hours on the hill, his open arms being caressed by the wind, his hair tousled, and him wishing to be lifted into the air so that he could fly over the city of Bucharest. The years passed and his passion for the wind increased.



His father wanted to enroll him in a military school but Henri continued to dream of the wind. Deep down, he felt that he knew its voice, its whispered and shouted words. He wanted to build something that spoke the same language.

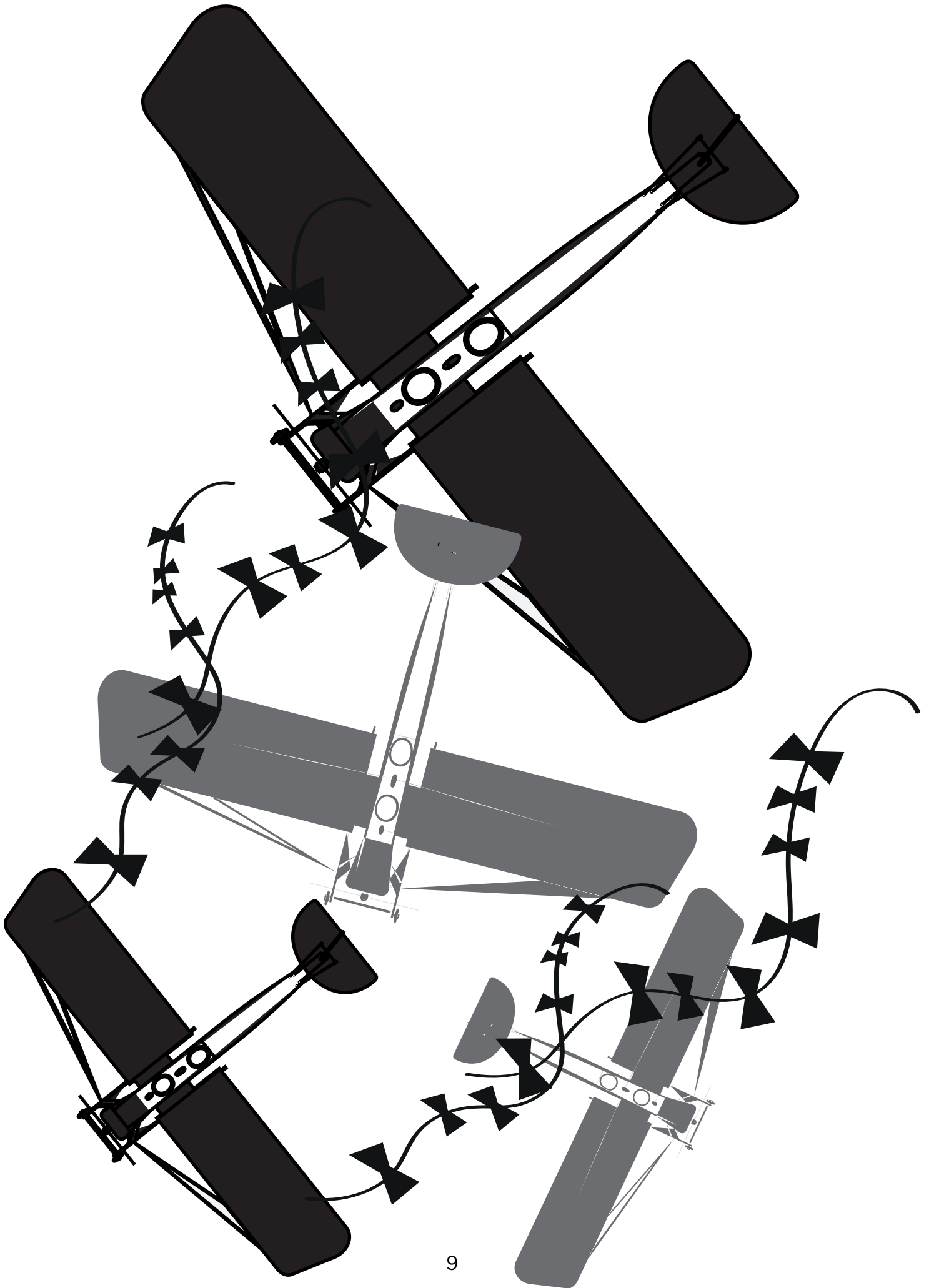
His spirit as an inventor did not sit well with military rules, so he obtained permission to leave the army and go on a long journey to meet and talk to other winds that blew and swept through the cities of Tehran, Isfahan and even Tibet.



On his return, he went to Paris to study and learn all there was to learn at the National School of Aeronautical Engineering and Construction. Little by little, his kites became planes.







He imagined one that had no propellers but had the force of the wind, as strong as the wind that day on the beach. However, he was probably too ahead of his time, so much so that the French engineer Gustave Eiffel said: “Henri was born 30 or even 50 years too early!” Indeed, it seems that his plane could not actually fly on its own.

Henri reported: “My plane flew but unfortunately it fell”, some wanted to believe him but others claimed “Coandă’s plane never lifted off the ground”.



So, he tried to build more traditional planes, with propellers like the mills he loved so much, and with these he was more successful.

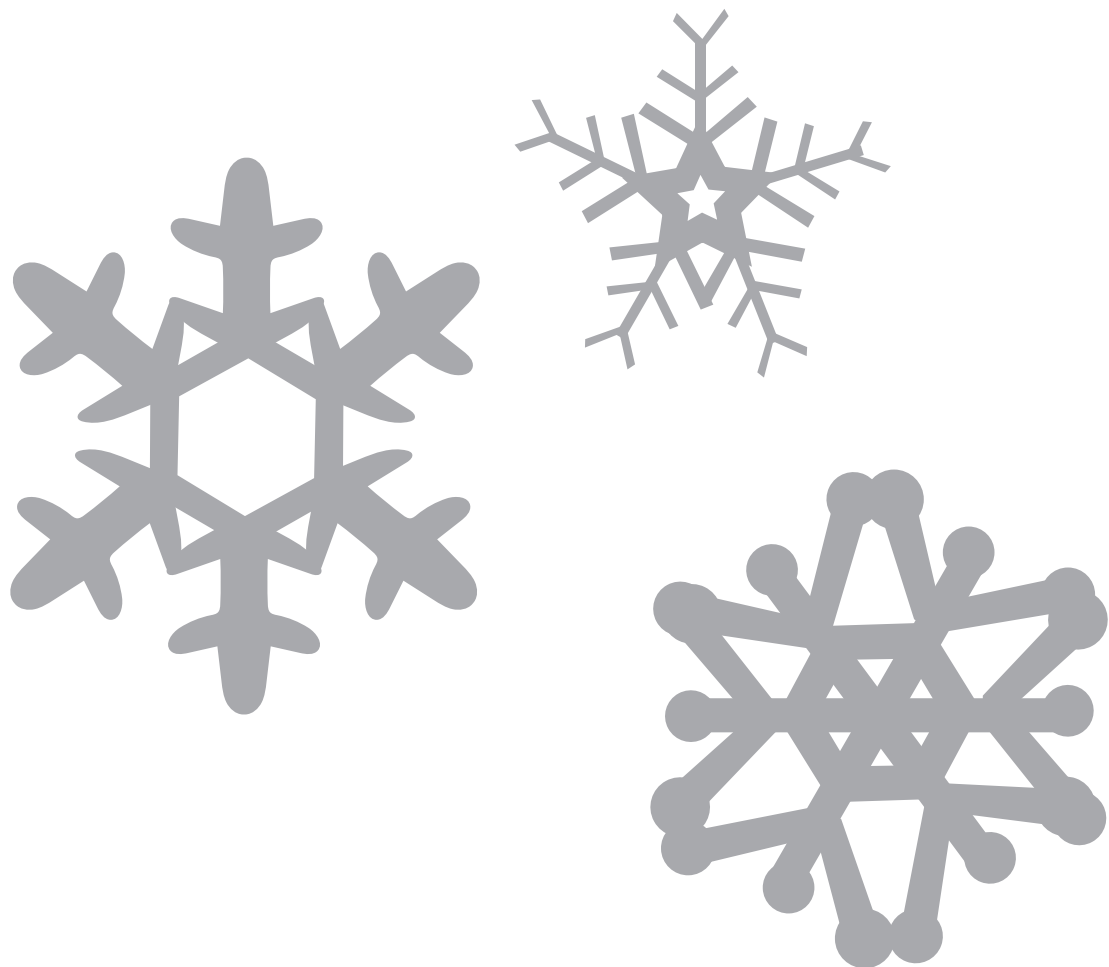


Henri had always been fascinated by everything related to nature: he wanted to preserve it, to understand it.

He was amazed by both water and snow, as snow is the solid form of water. “I wish I could preserve snowflakes, there is not one that is identical to another. They have such precious shapes that they almost look like embroidery.”

He was enchanted, he wished he could collect them as one would a dried flower, a seed or a button. Unable to do so, Henri photographed 1,500 snowflakes, discovering that snow is different depending on where it falls, but also that water is a precious commodity that can «cure» people.

Henri, studied, dreamed, imagined travelled and invented.



He discovered that the wind could take the shape of a surface, gliding over it almost as if drawing it. He was so proud of this phenomenon that he decided to name it after him: the Coandă effect... He invented a flying saucer, so that maybe if the aliens didn't come to visit, he could go on a nice little trip to them himself.



Henri seemed to keep his childlike spirit intact and kept inventing, but he had grown up...

And sometimes, through the process of growing up, one takes strange roads, dark roads, where one meets and hangs out with the wrong people. This is what happened to Henri. During the Second World War, when the world seemed to be split down the middle between the good and the bad, Henri sided with the bad for a year, trying to invent a faster plane for them, but fortunately he did not succeed.



His discoveries have been useful for other scientists, but have also had surprising benefits for the girls and women that spend time getting ready in front of the mirror. It is thanks to the Coanda effect that their powerful curling irons can twist and twirl their hair to make fluffy curls and soft waves, as if styled by Aeolus himself, the Greek god of winds.





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