

A Play in Four Acts

THE OCEAN

Swimming today, jagged rocks. The ocean palpitating like a jelly fish sway or a breast heaving in an act of love. Frightening, it makes me realize how impotent and small I am, like a speck of dust on the vast womb of the ocean's roaring surface. Yet once my snorkel mask goes beneath, there is calm, still, quiet calm in which the austere, simple rocks which were buffeted above seem to glow in purple growth, small almost iridescent green coral, splendid blue fish swimming beneath the surface.

Yet the beauty and peace is also frightening. Somehow I don't fit—in beauty or peace.

My breath comes out, coarse sounding, my legs move awkwardly compared to the gentle sway of the ocean rocking. I felt caught between two worlds, a struggling, austere world above and beautiful, awesomely quiet world below. A stranger to both, at home in neither.

As I climb on a rock, the sun begins to recede behind clouds. The rock cuts me, the razor sharp shells of mussels, also wound, glued to slippery, wave-pounded rocks., animate and inanimate grasping each other as one.

Stumbling on, fiery blood begins to run from cuts on fingers and legs.

The sun has disappeared.

Waves swelling higher, nearly submerging the rock. The rock, a large phallus, indifferently caressing and being caressed by waves' womb. The water gasps, finds, air, fills the void.

The long, craggy body of the rock is again revealed, majestic in its starkness.

The waves grow higher and the sky darkness. I jump in an effort to merge with the water. but the goggles fall over my eyes upon contact with the water and the snorkeler falls beneath the water's surface.

I grasp for the surface, choking, spitting water. I adjust the mask and snored, breathing rapidly and quickly submerge my face beneath.

Below the rough, menacing surface again lies beauty and mystery.

The coral below is deep and can barely be seen. I think I see the bright blue fish but find I can't swim deep enough to be certain.

The mask begins to fog. When I raise my head above the surface, the sky turning windy black, the waves are several feet over my head, and still, mounting to a crest, then crashing, pounding onto rocks which make no motion and only sit indifferently and endure the womb's pulsating culmination

Foam reaches skyward, crashing and pounding the motionless serrated rocks. This foam then falls slowly back into itself.

There seems no path between the rocks and crashing waves. The sky begins to pour forth more water, adding to the breasts heaving, encouraging it onward.

I find myself trapped, having to swim forward with my face under water to see rocks beneath the surface, above water without mask lowered because it was too fogged when worn to see. Behind me the waves attack and I try to avoid being cast by them onto the rocks.

The turmoil of the waves crashing onto the rocks stirs the sediment and makes it impossible to see beneath the surface. Only the hostility of the surface remains, the frightening beauty and peace of below buried beneath the turmoil caused by the waves.

I feel helpless beneath the womb. I'm unable to remain motionless like the rocks, and am tossed by the water's swelling and gasping, while grasping for something solid to hold onto. I can't control my forward motion and avoid the rocks ahead

Threads of consciousness broke, casting reason and objectivity adrift. I bury my head, grasping for the rocks' solid surface. Yet that which could give me stability is also that which I fear most. For it is jagged edges of rock upon which the sea's climax can helplessly smash me.

Crawling over rocks, trying to flow with the tide, to protect my stomach, scratched, now bleeding from mussels and rock, attacked by inanimate and animate on rock and in water.

I reach the shore, panting, gasping for breath, heart beating painfully, hand, stomach bleeding The ocean gently recedes from the shore, and indifferently returns to itself

THE CLIMB

Leaving the water, I pick up my backpack with its ever-present pencil and paper. I like always being ready to record any memorable events. Climbing up a steep rock incline, I am helped in my efforts by using a chain left as an aid left by a previous explorer, I realize I do not have the guts to be first. I will call an adventure climbing a stone slope which has an already established to aid in the climb. And also I am only trying it because I was told by another person of the relative ease of the climb.

Only when I think I see the corner pieces of the puzzle, a structure to contain uncertainty, will I take action and call it adventure. Together, we climb the slope. Do I go first to lead the way; or is that leaving her behind and I should go second, to protect her better that way?

I noticed something important last night when we were scrambling down another steep hill. When we went alone, apart, it was very difficult. However when we held hands it became easier. The reason is important. It was not because I would lean on her. Although I did. It was both that I could lean on her, and I could support her when she began to slip. The combination became physically important—only later did the psychological implications occur to me.

We continue to climb the makeshift trails, chain after chain leading us up the cliff-like structure. Once we reach the plateau, I reach back and I pull up the final chain, walling off the world below.

Further on, as we trudge through thick forest, we arrived at a shrine,. Five hundred feet below lay the rocks and swirling waves. I feel cut off from land and water, above both, and from my vantage point, able to objectively observe both. The sun has returned, and near the small shrine, the cicadas are madly rubbing their legs. The sound sensually pervades the freshly rained-upon trees. We spread a poncho beneath the shrine, right next to the steep drop.

Below the sea dashes against the rocks, like music which seeks to suspend itself in time, but is unable. Two longer slender branches of a pine tree seem to grow from the mountain, taking its pulsating, slender beauty from the mountains inanimate shiny sheerness.

Although branches jut nearly perpendicular from the rocks, they seem to form a frame, overlaid on the swirling water below. Carefully crossing her arms and pulling at the waist band, she luxuriously begins to pull off her yellow blouse, revealing a long narrow stomach leading into narrow hips on which rested faded blue jeans.

Her breasts are starkly white, austere, elongated as her hands stretches over her head, pulling the blouse off, then throwing it onto the shrine, and shakes her long, brown, windblown hair coyishly over her shoulders,

The breasts' whiteness contrast with the tan of her body. And the nipples, because of the angle at which she was standing, seem to rest on the ocean's surface. Her gentle breathing, arising and swelling her breasts, flows delicately into the swelling motion of the sea. Cut off from the world below we lie naked and excited next to each other. No better place, I suggest, to make love than beneath a Shinto shrine commemorating our oneness with nature.

Her hands run nimbly over my body. I watch her eyes, clear, deep blue, begin to close, and as I slowly rub her breasts first with my fingers then my tongue, like a small nurturing child. But I am not just a child, as my hand runs the length of her body and my long strokes are once again followed by my tongue. We are both panting and our bodies begin to flow into each other.

The motion stops while I put on a rubber. The cicadas' legs rub against each other, counterpoint to the ocean crashing against the rocks. Her eyes are closed as her fingernails press hard into my flesh. My knees rest on the dirt and I bend my head so I can look down over our bodies. Her red-brown pubic hairs split apart as I plunge deeper and deeper into her, then slowly depart to again return. The cicadas' sound becomes louder. Sweat joins us in sticky union. I see the waters flowing and crashing onto the rocks. Dirt fills my hands. I brush the sticks and mud with a rage of passion. My knees pained on the dirt, rubbing against stones, scratching, bleeding. Her fingers sharply plowing into me. Joyful, ecstatic Her teeth bite my deaf left ear. Pain becomes vulnerability becomes anger becomes rage. Leave my ear alone I whisper silently. My hands squeeze her shoulders hard...does she feel pain or ecstasy?

She gasps, but the flow continues, like the gasp of the foam spreading itself over the rock. Both gasps seems nothing more than the continuation and intermediary step in the currents flowing.

Her panting becomes louder, swept away by a current beyond herself. Her thighs pump higher, screaming to break, higher, pumping, hands clawing me. The surging surface of passion commands her to reach beyond herself, to push her hips so hard that my penis breaks through. The cicada's noise is pounding louder still, pounding, throbbing in my ears.

DESCENT

Her body surges from joyous ecstasy higher still. But her thighs' seeking only succeeds in pushing my penis from inside her.

She cries my name again. Twice. Plaintive, yearning, hopeful, despairing, melancholy. Her face is behind my left shoulder and I can't see her eyes. Because of my deafness, I can't hear her. But down her blond-haired arms I see drops of water, and know she is crying.

I have shrunk into impotence, dashed helplessly from between her legs and limply lying beside her. The pink, languid flesh enrages me. I grasp the dirt and stones, and crunch them cutting into my palms.

She shouts my name. She screams and my penis responds by limply lying between my legs.

"Kiss it!" I demand and I feel her wet lips run over it, trying to give it life. I feel distracted by her hair filled with pine needles. Her tongue, living. Its tenderness makes me cry out in pain. But nothing more than that the cry happens. It remains lying motionless. She continues. The pain of tenderness and impotence becomes unbearable. I cry out.

I feel life growing. She spreads her legs and with her hand tries to make it fit. "Stick it in," I shout. "Damn it, put it in now."

"It's not hard enough," she whispers

Rubbing rapidly up and down finally it fits and slowly I rock up and down with her. I make a motion to put my hands beneath her hips to raise them. As I do, it falls out limp. Screaming in inchoate anger, wanting to find the words to blame her. Her arms loosen from around me as she looks down at the ocean below.

I follow her gaze. Such beauty below us. Surrounded by startling, dazzling, shimmering majesty. From the heart of stunning nature's call, my sex, my life, my creative urge lies flaccid between my legs.

Two thoughts cross my mind simultaneously.

Leap into the water. Merge with it since you're too impotent to merge with your beloved. But at the same time knowing I wouldn't kill myself because of fear, so would I feign this only to frighten and punish her?

I stare long and hard at the beach and make a motion as if to roll off. I feel her hands clinch in fear. Make her feel the blame for deserting me when I wasn't ready, for exceeding me, going beyond, soaring, like the foam which is thrusting me impotently onto the rocks. "This is your fault. I hate you for causing this," I yell knowing my words make no sense.

I see her reddish enflamed vagina open, surrounded by brown hair, smiling. My penis remained lifeless, but my rage mounts, as a sea blown by a gale. What if we are both blown off the cliff? How can I even have that thought?

Her sympathy and compassion turning to fear. She pulls her legs together, starts to get up. Her back is covered with sticks, dirt, and a large festering carbuncle. I watch her leave out of the corner of my eye. Fine, go. I don't need your sympathy. But she stops and returns. Why? I'm

confused. I don't want to hug her. Or forgive her. I didn't want her to comfort me. I rebuff her outstretched arms. I don't want her compassionate pity.

I who helped initiate her passion, no longer contain or belong to it. A cicada seems to sit next to my ear, drowning out all life but itself.

No place for me in society. No place for me in a relationship. I only bring hurt. Will I ever fit, find work, belong anywhere? "I don't know what I want." Will I ever be a worthy beloved? Stop, why those thoughts now? Oh, God, it's as if I'm cutting my tail. Huh. What do I even mean? Silly boy. Tonight there is a half moon over a tall tree. Me alone. Then, seeing the ocean, I begin to cry. Do my tears add anything to the water?

CLIMAX

An indifference and helplessness simultaneously fill me. I sit, and watch an ant crawl over my arm. Only this ant matters. Is it a she or he? I remember from biology most ants are she's, with no wings. She loses herself in strands of hair on my fingers, becomes entangled in my thumb joint, rises over veins like mountains and treads valleys of lines within my palm. I turn my hand to accommodate her, for I feel my fate bound to hers.

She falls. I begin crying, desperately trying to find her, forcing her to return to my hand, to nestle snugly within me.

Her life is mine. I have to be life giving, protective of her. Although I haven't been able to give life, I have to protect it.

Again the ant is crawling along my arm and I feel a strange joy. The ocean and cicadas are forgotten.

She has left, and is no longer at my shoulder. Only the ant and I are living together.

The ant falls again. But this time I am stronger.

I watch her crawl into the dirt. Raising my eyes, I watched the rock indifferently pounded by ocean foam.

Go, I say to her.

I watch her crawl away and leave me.

An inexplicable feeling runs through me. I am on a different level. Our relationship can now only exist on this new level. Yet is this level higher or lower? I do not yet know.

The sun re-emerges briefly from the tops of the trees, piercing outstretched limbs; then disappears as quickly. It begins to rain, like warriors attacking with spears. Balancing on my buttocks, and tensing my stomach as hard as I can, I raise my legs and arms to the sky, over and over mixing my body with nature's dirt and mud, hearing the cicadas' fervent rubbing sounds, and watching the ocean's divinity from my higher elevation, my flowing, animal mind, dirt streaked sweaty body becoming one as at last I have a shattering climatic orgasm.

I cast the sperm into the shrine, laugh at the rain, open my backpack, pick up pencil and paper, and begin to write.

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