

Dream of Mother Earth

In a feverish dream, I was drowning but could not recall why. As I sank deeper, I thrashed around but thick orange cloth weighed me down and flowed out in uncontrollable directions. I looked up and there was a boat just above. It looked so close but also impossibly far. I choked. Inhaled water and figured this would be the end.

I didn't live near the ocean, own a boat or have any reason to be there. I could not understand why my lungs were filling with salty water and I was being sucked into the deep, dark sea. A long dark slithering shape broke the surface tension of the water and descended down to wrap gently around my arms. Looking like a rope – from its texture and color – but moving and sliding around my body like a snake. Sentient and with its own direction. The snake/rope constricted and pulled me up above the water with such speed and force that the water inside me was completely knocked out. I gasped and it was nothing but fresh air – despite just drowning – I was now breathing completely fine, if not with a little soreness in my throat and diaphragm.

I looked around frantically. I was back in my garden, surrounded by the trees and plants and grass I was familiar with. I was dangling – suspended above the ground. I followed the braided strands of dark luminous hair. They were held together with delicate hands that daintily but powerfully wrung the sea water and me out of the hair and onto the ground. I collapsed onto the grass and stared at the woman. She hovered over my well. Her body – with out any apparent supports, or wires or anything, just floated, crouching above the well. I could not speak. I coughed up more water. From where I could not tell. I thought it had all been expelled but an insane amount of water now projected from my mouth. As well as, seaweed, barnacles, shells, coral, sand and fish. All dead and wet and lying on the grass. All lifeless and dripping with water and bile on the vibrant, luscious grass. I looked up.

“Thank you”

And as if she didn't hear me, she dunked her hair once more into my well. When she removed it to wring it out again it – many large, dark urchins fell from the strands and back into the well.

“I'm lucky those didn't come out of my stomach.” I laughed

She smiled, but the smile was just as cynical and cruel as it was joyful and entertained.

“You should all be so lucky, right?” She sneered.

“I'm not sure what you mean . . . “ I replied hesitantly.

“Well, I didn't pin you for one to self-reflect or meditate. That's why I put you in there and then rescued you actually.”

“I think gardening is meditative to me. . . Wait, what do you mean you put me there!? Did you

want me to suffer like that?

“Life is suffering” she says matter of factly.

“What does that mean? And what just exactly is going on here?” I ask. “Was all that some sort of sick joke?”

“More like an awakening.”

“But I am a good person. Who even are you to judge?”

“I am Mother Earth – well one incarnation.”

“Oh, ah, well, I'm sorry?”

“Yeah, you should be! I mean, you are a good person but you don't engage or share it with the world. You may do right by yourself, your family and follow laws, but there's nothing for me. For everyone and everything. Because I give that constantly without condition. But now I suffer, more than ever. And I think you have become too complacent, but you're also doing well for yourself and I think you could do something for me.”

“What could I possibly do for Mother Earth? And if I can be honest there's other ways to get my attention. I'm quite reasonable and I would do something.”

“Would you? I see your facebook and social media and emails.” At this point, Mother Earth produced a phone, from somewhere, and started scrolling through my pages. “These are all “well intentioned” but what are you actually doing?”

“Spreading awareness . . .”

“You can do more! You can do actual things! And you will for me. For saving your life.”

“But didn't you put me in danger? I mean it doesn't even make sense. I was pulled from my well but the sea water and sea creatures and . . .”

“Exactly!”

“But that's not an answer and you put me in danger!”

“I put you on this Earth . . . well me. I can do whatever I want!”

“Okay, I can't really argue with that. What do I need to do?”

“You sure?”

“Can I be?”

“You must!”

“How will I know what to do?”

Her hair slithered around me again and wrapped tightly around my mid-section. She dunked me back into the well and with a big splash I wake up in my bed, shaking and wet and covered in seaweed. I pick the seaweed off of my body and the bed. I'm not sure what to do with it. I held the damp, dark

strands of seaweed between my fingers. It is impossibly wet, slimy and yet delicate and precious. Long locks of black green purple jelly. Was this hers? I quickly search about my bed and gathered every inch and scrap of the fragile seaweed. I laid them out gently on my window sill. On top of some baking paper so they would not stick to the wooden frame and could dry safely in the warm sunlight that shines into my room throughout the day.

From not having a single idea what was going on. To then having one – singular – motivating goal . . . no more like a mission to carry out. That I must carry out – passionately, caring, thoughtfully, openly and humbly. And Mother Earth – at least I can be sure to say – it might have been her – gave me something miraculous. Even if no one believes that these bundles of drying seaweed are or well is a part of her. Were these the luscious strands of her long pony-tail that rescued me from those dangerous waters? Well danger she also put me in, but I guess that's all part of the story. We are brought onto her tumultuous world. So full of her life and she challenges us to make something of it. But something that will still honor, admire, and respect her. Not supersede, destroy, take over or control. Or I guess in my case, sit back and dishonor, and disrespect her through apathy, shifting that fragile balance, away from where we might meet in the middle – and more towards me – humanity and control and destruction. So I decided to construct the Mother Earth statue here at the Big Buddha. Have you seen it? (actually it is almost ironic now - making something that tries to be permanent in her natural environment. But there are reasons! Other ideas, symbols, goals here.) I've enshrined her hair inside that monument dedicated to her. They sit, securely nestled, within a small wooden box deep within the statue. It is just the first act I've dedicated to her . . .