



FRANCESCA'S DREAM

A WALK THROUGH TIME

I met Francesca in a crafts store whilst searching out needles for leather. I didn't find any needles, but I did have the pleasure of meeting Francesca who worked there. I soon discovered that she made leather covered notebooks, had a boyfriend in a local band and that we had a mutual acquaintance in the arts. She was dressed in distinctive garb and sported a scarf wrapped around her unnaturally bright red hair so I made the assumption that she might just be a vivid dreamer. She related this dream to me in the aisle of the store and I was struck by its archetypes and the strong impression that it conveyed. This is her dream:

I was walking with a friend in a large park, but I couldn't tell say for sure exactly where, just that it was companionable. We came to a hill and proceeded to climb to try and ascertain where we were as we had meandered through the park without direction. I could smell the earth and the grass – it was tranquil.

We reached the top in time to see the sun set, coloured flames lashing out across the horizon. Before us lay two lakes that were bisected by a causeway and stretched off into infinity. We watched the sun lower itself below the horizon and the darkness of night descended over the landscape. I began to slowly move down the side of the slope of the hill, carefully choosing my steps. When I reached the bottom, I realised that my

friend was no longer with me. It seemed perfectly right that I should carry on alone. The night was clear but moonless, only the stars gave off some light.

As I stepped onto the causeway, I saw that it was wet. The further I continue along it, the more waterlogged it became and the mud sucked and squelched in protest every time I withdraw my foot. This is the only sound that I can hear. It seemed important that I continue as I felt that there was something that I needed to see. At some point, I fell onto my knees into the mud and peered into the lake that was on my left.

I found myself face to face with what can only be described as a corpse floating just below the surface of the water. It was almost skeletal in appearance with the remains of greyish blue, spongy rotten flesh still clinging to its skull with tendrils of stringy black hair dancing around the remains of its head. For one horrific moment, I was convinced it's thin bloodless lips moved as though in speech and recoiled in horror, certain that if I stare into its sightless eyes any longer, it would become aware of my presence.

I struggled to get back onto my feet and flail blindly back along the path in the direction from which I had come. At one point, I fall into the shallows of the opposing lake that I had not noticed in my haste to escape the rotting corpse. The shock of the cold water on my skin brought me to my senses and I found myself staring blankly at the lake that was by then fully illuminated by the moon. To my complete amazement, there were the most elegant figures standing proud above the surface of the lake! I was awestruck by their beauty and at a loss as to why I had not noticed them before.

Then came the realisation that they were in fact, white marble statues in the classical Greek style, some women, some men, but the strange thing was that although they were all obviously sculpture, they had human hair which was blowing in a breeze that I could not feel. The fact that they had flowing hair would have been odd in itself, but the colour of their hair was most peculiar– some had orange hair while others boasted a lime green.

One statue in particular captured my attention. It depicted a woman with beautiful long green hair that drifted around her body silently in the breeze. I was captivated by her not only because of her beauty, but because she had such a melancholy countenance and I was almost certain that I could hear her crying somewhere deep within her marble facade.

The silvery moonlight highlighted her features and it gave the illusion of supple skin and as the light from the moon slipped over her features, it seemed to me that the expression on her face changed. I stood watching her looking for signs that she might respond to my attention. I felt her sorrow and understood that she was alive in some way and in great pain, but I was powerless to help her, so I just watched her orange hair blowing about in the wind as she stared sadly into the watery void.

Ay some point, I felt as though I was a voyeur to her private grief and decided that I should leave her in peace, so I respectfully made my exit back up the path to the base of the hill where to my complete surprise and relief, I found my friend waiting for me.