

Caves

Above the water the rocks had an exquisite range of colours and patterns. Delicately layered upon the rounded irregular hollows and ridges there was a deep rich green sea moss. It clung to the contours and looked like the most precious velvet brushed in whichever way the sea had left it. Then all around was a pale purple lichen looking like so many islands and continents on a map. When the water within the cave rose in a swell it engulfed the prismatic colours in its cool liquid light. The lichen changed dramatically from pale purple to a cold electric green shimmering through the surface. The sea moss became a burning blackness pulling us your glance, a tiny hole of immeasurable depth.

The swell came rolling along the dripping rock walls. Stomach dropping, boat rising, touching the roof of the cave boat dropping as a sudden blast of brine roared out from the dark recesses of the stone. My hair curled and was damp my lips tasted of salt, I clung to the bruised rocks above me. Sitting down, sitting up with the succeeding waves. Grasping in the onslaught of spray and adrenalin.

Into the large rock hallway, slurping water, pushed up and dropped away. Into the narrow pulling in the ears, I put my hands on either wall, up and down. All my senses straining ahead into the dark, hands slipping on slimy rocks. A sudden snort from the echoes as water drops only to immediately rise rapidly. Hands losing holds and the boat bumps against the walls, edging forward. Upwards at speed a cough of brine in my face and down and forwards. And forwards the dark all around deep and cold. Scrabbling at the wet dark solidity toward the light.

Wide and low, streams of drips. Gently the cress touches the top, recedes and surges out and down. A sharp pull on the ears sliding beneath low hanging ceiling droplets wetting my hair. Pull again to creak against the subterranean beach, stones clanking and popping. Jumping ashore clutching the line, breathing the sweet stous of seaweed and salt. Bare feet sliding on the large smooth stones, swell heaving itself inwards leaving the boat ashore. I squat on my haunches and hock back as a wave rolls toward me. My balance falters, I breathe in.

— The wave is pulled away from underneath and drops slowly on the pebbles with a roar and groan followed by the stones applauding the receding water. I glance toward something behind me, it was nothing, it is dark. It is pitch dark and a feeling of presence pervades. I edge away and look at the light. Cannot see the opening as a wave rears up to touch the ceiling. A rippling in the light flickers across the rock before the wave drops.

Breathing hard and putting out my hand for balance. Feeling cold wet rock, hard and smooth. The waves foundation pops the stones, roaring and receding, leaving the crest to gently lay itself upon the shore in soft white foam. Making a long low 'hush' it faded out of the shadow.