



* Stories of Knowing Otherwise *

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SOMETHING SHE SAID

A woman is traveling, in the way that people do, on her path to meet her new husband. It is a long walk. The sun is very hot. No one else is in sight. She grows thirsty. She tries to speak but her mouth is dry.

"I am lost," she thinks. She sits down on a large rock. "Why have I come this way?" she asks. She stares at the rock. A tear falls from her face onto it. "I will die of thirst. This is the end of it all," she says.

The stone begins to vibrate. Frightened, She jumps up. She lays her hand on the stone and it is motionless. She sits down again upon it. The stone vibrates again. She presses her dry mouth against it. "What is here?" she whispers. It makes a low humming. She tries to hum the same note the rock makes. The rock splits open between her legs. Clear, cold water pours out of the stone. A blue pool forms beside the road, glittering in the sunlight. Jumping up, the woman pulls off her clothes and dives into this beautiful pool. Her body is swallowed by the cool water. She rolls and dives. She has never felt this way before. She forgets who she is. She forgets where she is going. She does not know how long she is here. She does not care.

Floating in this blue pool she feels something moving. She sees wings reflected in the water. A long tongue reaches down to drink from the back of her neck. Her own dry tongue loosens in her mouth. She begins to sing a song she does not know as she swims. She remembers that she has not taken a drink yet. She opens her mouth and swallows. Suddenly she is sitting on the rock again. There is no water, no wings, no split in the rock. She is refreshed and ready to continue her journey. She rises and walks on in the direction she has been told to go, touching the ground lightly.

Soon she comes to a village. The man who will become her husband is waiting. They are married. They stand and work and walk and lay side by side. She does not know what to say to

him. He does not know what to do for her. They are not happy together. She dreams of the stone and the blue pool. But She cannot remember which road she took to come to her husband's village.

"I want to find the Blue Pool," she tells him one day.

"This is the first you have spoken of it," he says.

"Which road did I take to come here?" she asks.

"There is no blue pool in this land," he replies.

"There is and I will find it," she insists.

"If there was a blue pool someone would have told me," he insists.

They argue until She walks out the door and down the road. He follows her.

"You want to leave and go back to your mother," he yells.

"No. I want to find the blue pool," she says. They argue and argue as they walk and walk until they are hot and tired and lost. Their mouths are dry. They can talk no more. They stop under the blinding sun. He sits down, silent. Seeing no rock, the woman sits on her husband.

"We are lost," she thinks, "Why have we come this way?" She stares down at her husband. He looks into her eyes. A tear falls from her face onto his chest. "We will die of thirst," she says, "This is the end of it all." His body begins to shake. She presses her mouth to his ear. "What is here?" she whispers. He begins to moan. She harmonizes. His head splits open and cold, clear water pours out into a shimmering blue pool. Pulling off her clothes, the woman dives into the pool. All of her body is caressed. She rolls, dives, swims beneath the surface. She has never felt this way before. She forgets where they are going. She does not know what She is. She does not know how long she is here. She does not care.

As she floats, she feels something moving. She is not alone. Something touches the back of her neck. Her dry tongue loosens and she begins to sing a song she does not know. She opens her mouth and swallows. Suddenly she is sitting on her husband again. There is no pool. They both feel refreshed and ready to go on.

"How did you become a river?" she asks her husband.

"I don't know," He replies. "It must have been something you said."

They rise and walk on together in the direction they have been going, touching the earth lightly.

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