Simmer Plume

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Cover Page Footnote

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Simmer Plume

Only knowing coarse adjustment
And forever dubious to the fine
She surfaces in her plume of foam
Hair as black as crow wings
And slick as Indian ink
Sliding down her back and breasts.

She strumpets onto the tambourine shore
Of cymbal shells and brass sand
Orchestrating sounds with her footfalls
Each toe a new note.
She kicks and sprockets forward
Alarming Newton with quantum leaps.
Sea washed hands merge behind her back
Clasping a delicate sea sprig of green sparkling.

She explodes into a wild dance
Dictated by the Muses.
Oh! Memories of Eve.
Her hair a drape of dark water
Whips and slaps stringing a black mask
Through which altricial eyes simmer.

Grooving and sliding, her body begins to purl
In tune with the sea’s vibrations
Then with a swthy shrill
She bursts into speckles of silvery light
All rushing to the bleeding western sun
Trailed by an inky black ribbon.

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They lie now in small packets upon the desk, a position hardly appropriate for what they contain. In the clutter and waste that surround them they appear to be almost another pile of insignificant odds and ends. Occasionally will be extracted from this wasteland and examined but these brief glances hardly do justice to the memories they evoke.

These small photographs tell the story of another time and place from which my present world seems far removed. They tell the story of students placing the traditional books and papers into the background and learning to make a classroom out of life itself. They record the incidents and events of this situation with remarkable ease but they cannot even begin to fathom the true enrichment which four months abroad has impressed upon my mind.

It is late August and a group of tired students emerges from London’s Gatwick Airport. We have come from all parts of this land we call America to experience life in a far different land. We have temporarily left behind all those dear to us and at the moment we are not at all sure we have made the right decision. We know that there will be letters and calls from our families and sweethearts but we also know that for four months we will still be separated from them. Even all our advanced technology and all our sophisticated communications systems have not found a way to completely bridge the space which now exists between us and those that we have left behind.

The small colored rectangles record me and those around me during these first few days and show our somewhat awkward smiles and frowns as we learn to cope with this new life. But they cannot show the thoughts that race through my mind: my fears, my doubts, and ultimately my joy at the wonder of my new environment. This they will never be able to do and these memories will live only in my mind.

In the first week, I am constantly reminded that, even in England, schools and academics must go on. I wrestle with decisions about what courses to take. To guide me, I consider what material I will be able to gain a new perspective on by studying it abroad. At the same time, I blush to admit that I am trying to make my weekends as long as possible in order to have time to explore my new surroundings.

Now, there are places to go and things to do. I must see a play; it would be sinful to come to London, and not do so. I must test the city’s pubs and see how their lager measures up to American beer. Buckingham Palace,