

NOT QUITE ENOUGH

Scene 1 – The Context

For years, we walked ... at times, hand in hand ... at others, him in front, me behind - never the reverse ...
Seldom speaking ... words - stains on silence, or so he said ... unwanted ... unneeded ...

[whisper to self, deep sense of meaning ... or just mouthing the words, no sound]

... yet, I bled ...

[she pauses, looks up at sky, then around at the horizon line]

When we did speak ... a question, a declaration ... there was never a reply. The act alone - a slow stream
of air, shaped by lips and tongue, forming sounds ... ones which, by local convention, carried meaning ...
an elusive concept ...

[another pause – coming back to “present”]

I, at first, in my early years, I would pause ... thinking more to follow ... but never. So, I would, again,
place one foot in front of the other ... at times experimenting with gait, striving to find balance ... a
diversion ... for this was all the life left me ... one foot, then another ... once he had passed.

I cried – I think – the day he went on ... ahead ... beyond the horizon ... out of sight. He said ... or
motioned ... told me, in some way, he needed me no more ... that I ... or he ... must go ... and with that, I
stopped ... in shock or dread ... numbed ...

and stood ... fighting back a feeling I could neither name nor explain ... I offered my hand ... I knew naught
else to do save that ...

[a long pause as she waits, arm outstretched, for him to return, yet he does not]

Without a glance ... or token of recognition, he vanished ... and was gone.

Since I was six ... this, my first time ... alone ... I stood ... so strange ... felt wrong ... waiting ... still ...
alone ... How could he ... this ... had I done something wrong ... to offend him ... to make him move on ...

I began to experiment, again ... with movement, gait ... like a dancer ... posed, poised ... pliable, now not
... a plie, tendu, ronde de jambe ...

So strange ... my body, my hips, my legs ... words came into my mind ... a war – within me, to move or
stay, to stand or to ... to dégagé ... something came over me, took control ... I could stand no more ... a
pirouette en dehors ... chaîné ... piqué ... trombé pas de bouree ... chaîné ... piqué ... trombé pas de
bouree ...

*[continues a bit, almost becoming a full-choreographed dance, then stops ...
laughter, joy, the release of soul enchained too long, now feeling freedom for the first time]*

... years of walking, only ... one foot, in front of the other ... one foot at a time ... never to the side or
behind ... again, and yet again ... days passing into nights ... yet, suddenly, now, I was alive ...

[slowly falls into a trance, a decrescendo, reverie, a memory, unclear if painful or gay]

On fire? Day passing into night ... that night ... that one night ... just once ... he touched me .. in that way.

[Stops, reverie – cooled passion, pleasure + pain remembered ... sinks to knees]

We lay together *[looking now with only neck and head for the exact spot]* ... looking at ... *[lost in attempting to remember]* ... at ... each other ... ourselves ... ourselves, alone... his hand in mine, my left, his right, our only hands ... a sea ... of ...

[Music fades up - a slow passionate pas de deux ensues, only her visible]

His hand ... touches me ... his arm ... then the other ... his breath ... all silence, softness, a warm breeze caresses my cheek ... carresses me ... caritas or? ... waves of warm currents bathe me ...

[A young girl, angelic, like a vision, high above, floating, She gazes ... a long pause]

Our daughter ... our wee baby girl ... Is that why he went on, ahead, faded from sight ... no more a part of our days ... or nights ... Emma and me ... now alone ..

We were enough ... together ... she, enough for me ... I prayed I, the same for her ... unsure yet certain that 'going on' was our only way ..

[Video of dance moves + pronunciation, if actress unfamiliar with ballet + terminology - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWLy4IKgd1M>]

Scene 2 – Emma's Introduction

I once dreamed, when Emma's age, of a different life.

Of shadows. And cherry blossoms. A father's touch ... my own, long gone, unknown to me. A normal life ... so it seemed. I played. Made-up games. With made-up creatures, with made-up names. Norwen ... Sigrid ... Anniki. I knew stories of ... of following reindeer ... of surviving, thriving, on the facts of their own lives, these who went before ...

[pause]

Facts ... mere mystery, for I knew no facts ... not of their lives nor of my own ... merely images, often vague, clouds ... outlines ... but sometimes a name would appear in my mind ... and I wondered, were these the names of those now long dead whose blood yet coarsed within my veins ... giving shape to my fingers, my thighs, my legs ...

And among those misty images, within the echo of those names ... one vague notion recurred again, yet again ... an unexplainable sense that I had once danced ... had been a dancer? No ... yet it seems ...

[stops, again lost in thought, each thought shown clearly on her face]

It was said his every desire was my own ... that I had no desires which were not first his ... then he left, walked on, alone. In time, I came to see that Emma and I ... we had to stand on our own ... a thing I knew not how to do.

He first took my hand when I was six. Everything I came to know was of him, from him ... and we walked ... only, ever, walked, hand in hand, one foot in front of the other ... seldom - no, never looking up ... only down ... whether wind or rain, our only shelter naught save the need to go on, to this very day ...

[looking up at Emma, sorrowfully]

How was I to teach her what I myself did not know?

Scene 3 - The Broken Ballerina or The Image

[images - child with mother learning to dance, a child crestfallen, something denoting aspiration, inspiration. Music fades up – as they, though on different levels, begin to dance in unison. The woman is awkward – struggling, making the moves but not with comfort, ease, often unbalanced. The girl, Emma, on the otherhand has beauty, grace and style.]



[Music – Tetrishead (ending suddenly @5:30) by Zoe Keating
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk7pIXZUQhs>

A tentative posture ... feet in 1st position ... arms move into 4th position ... tendu front, tendu 2nd, tendu back, 1st ... tendu other leg front, 2nd, back and stumble ...

[no, no ... a step, a half turn, a step ... mentally preparing ...]

feet in 1st position ... arms into 4th position ...

[stop, no ...]

feet in 1st, arms in 1st, lift leg, promenade to arabesque with awkward jump (fouette turn) ...

[frustration, slumps to floor, seated, in tears, nearly so, wipes her eyes, rises]

arm positions with feet in 1st position ... moving through positions

[tears still flowing ... sobs, audible]

alignment exercise (ending with glissades ... ?) ... pas de bourée + révérence

[pause ... unsure but with gathering confidence ... returns to 1st position, arms 3rd]

the “fred step” - arabesque + développé + pas de bourée + pas de chat

[repeat 3 or 4 times ... then stops ... a leg pain ... a heartache ...]

[She, the woman, stops. Looks up. Emma, her daughter, continues on as she watches, admiring]

Scene 4 – The Conundrum

It seemed simple at first, to raise a child ... though barely more than a child myself. Yet, years of walking, head bowed, eyes down ... counting each step – our “little secret” he called it ... thousands upon thousands of steps ... seldom speaking ... stains on silence ...

Me, wanting, wishing, hoping to be more than I had been ... but not knowing what I had been ... or, even if there was “more”, what might it be

Every desire I ever had was first his own ... I had no desires other than his ... yet, now, a feeling I didn't fully understand, but one which held such command over me ... Emma ...

Emma ... such a beautiful child ... should I, could I be content to have her step, hand in hand, counting, head down ... I knew, in my heart ... no, deeper ... [*hands folded over her pelvic area*] ... here, in my very being, this was not right for her ... not the way I would want her to be ...

But I knew no more than to stop ... to raise my leg ... a coupé, a passé ... lo, she did the same ... as though a mirror image of me, only better, more free, more able to fly ... an attitude and full extension ...

Then she ... into an arabesque ... and I felt, as though tied by invisible chords (spelling intended) compelled to do the same ... awkwardly, unsteady ... trying to hold as she, so graceful, yet firm ...

But I could not ... and fell out ... yet she continued on

And therein lay the conundrum ... she did not – could not? – would not? Stop .. and I ... in silence, looked on ... and for the first time in my meager memory, I wanted to be like her ... a desire which was not his first, but of my own invention ...

And I sank to me knees ... in, in ... in what, I did not know ...

And that's when she came to me ... held out an arm, as I had once done myself ... and I saw, in that arm, in the offer of her hand, a universe, unfolding, bewildering, unknown, but so warm and though I knew not what to do, I felt myself ... drawn ...

Scene TBD – Title TBD

*[This must come later, to not give away the story too early,
one presaged by the word 'caritas']*

Equally certain she would learn a different way ... not one step in front of the other ... always onward without bend or arc ... rather, movements like those of a dancer, poses of her own design ... in her own rhythm, her own time ... a thing of which I knew nothing but sensed this ... this ... must be what life is about