

23 Feb 2012

Note to Self

Dear Self,

Your value has yet to be determined. There is a pressure in your head, pressure enough to do one of two things: produce a diamond or kill you through implosion.

You are the Marianas Trench, the deepest part of the ocean, where strange monsters and delicate wisps of phosphorous light creatures live side by side in the dark. The pressure that many leagues under the sea is unendurable to most living things; without even a hint of surface light, there is freezing, deadlly cold.

Who would visit such a place--an environment in which any number of secret things might kill you? Those who cohabit this space are few and vastly far between. It would take a miracle for two of you even to touch amidst the endless miles of ocean. It is a life of isolation and silence. Why fight for life in this black icy-cold?

And yet, there are miracles in the deep, beauty that lives only in that much depth and adversity. There is magic in the deep: iridescent sparks in the ocean-sky, volcanic warmth straight from the center of the earth's core. Occasionally molten heat will erupt, birthing whole colonies of mysterious, (hitherto unknown) indeterminate life. Just as quickly, their lives end, turning to ash and ice, when the life-sustaining fires die. Husks and skeletons are left, undisturbed—and unnoticed—by all but bottom-dwelling hagfish, happy to feast on others' remains. Megladon himself was no doubt unfleshed by these death-eating worms of the deep.

The laws are primal on the abyssal plane; there are no masquerades. no pretense. It is a world of extremes: extraordinary in its monstrosity, terrible in its beauty, desolate for miles, or teeming with life in brief, explosive moments. There is no moderate existence. This is the context into which you were born and in which you must operate.

Knowing this, the impossibility of surface life is excruciatingly clear. For you, the sun may as well be a myth, its warmth an impossible dream. You are told—and believe—that this is the energy upon which your world depends; without this star, the whole of earth would disappear, including your secret life of beauty; a world within a world.

And, while you don't desire a surface life, don't envy the easy camaraderie of dolphins, or schools of identical fish, you sometimes wish to understand light, to touch things that have been kissed by the warmth of the sun.

You know this. You accept your lot in life, the dark reality of your abyssal dwelling. You accept the gifts that it renders and try not to lament the loss of sunlight. There is simply no point; that reality can't be yours.

Turn your thoughts away from dreams of love and impossible longings. Refocus your passions on creating a diamond. Refuse to be distracted by thoughts of a world beyond your reach. Your life has two possibilities: produce treasure or be left as so much carbon dust. Create something perfect or die obscure.