

The beach is long and curved, two double crescents hitched together in the middle by a spur of big round boulders on which the long sea grasses lay submissively when the tide is out. The tide is out. The sea is flat and silverish, gentle arcs of it sweeping up and over the fat golden sand. Trimmed in foam, it washes over my walking feet.

The sun is out of sight behind the high green velveteen cliffs, but the pillowing clouds are lit gold and coral pink from within. Three bright planets sit winking in the climbing indigo of the rising night, one flashing bluewhite like a diamond, teasingly. Gold and coral pink slide into plum purple, then the sky really is the night and the night is very gentle, externally. Internally, the rising nearly-full moon is pulling tides from one side of my emotional sea to another.

I walk, making sure to keep my feet wet. The big coarse grains of sand feel divine. The beach is one long foot massage. There are white chunks of rolled about coral, some dark rocks, no shells of significance. The wind is unusually limpid. It barely moves my hair.

A fisherman has three enormous poles set up, the lines going over the heads of beach walkers and leading into the mysterious mercury of the shifting sea. I walk under the lines, think of the fact that death can be a tethered thing, that there are three potential deaths tethered to the darkening beach.

Now the night is all the way arrived, I can smell more than I can see. The sea is still warm and foamy around my ankles, I carry my shoes and car keys in one hand. A little way on I meet another fisherman, this man with one modest pole. I look at him, ask what he is fishing for. He laughs, says if he can't see then the fish surely can't either. Reels his line in, shoulders his pole. We walk home in opposite directions along two crescents

of beach, which are hitched together in the middle by
invisible boulders on
which the long sea grasses lay when the tide is out. The
tide is out.