

ANTHONY MANNIX

*A Strange Dream about Water*

I

words are strange creatures. they desert to lofty institutions and academic palaces and leave the average man in the street short. but I run a small backyard business in words. and as such can come to grips with the fluctuating market better than the average soul. as an observer of words over the years i have no conclusions to make. i am not a man who makes conclusions. experience tells me, however, that words only become a difficulty when they are wanted for some purpose. if i were writing a letter for employment or perhaps to a companionship agency i could be no more honest with you. and what i have to say is in the way of an honest revelation. my small concern in the word industry has left me affected. the use of a typewriter leaves my stomach twisted into a claw. when i have to depart from this instrument, i do not depart, i flee. from experience, a truism seems to be appearing and that is that words and language are no difficulty, no difficulty whatsoever, until a purpose has been proposed for them, such as writing. then, they become the bugbear, then they become an instrument for subtle and obtuse discomfort. as to solutions for this occasioning, i have none. i am not a man to have solutions, either...

II

words are indeed strange creatures. they are continually on the desertion list and yet still buzz like demented bees around one's skull. they all pretend that they are venerable and they all deny that they are vulnerable. they are truly the echoes of Man's bone and sinew... and yet they are autonomous and yet they are also nothing, not even the scrapings from a boot. i have a small backyard business in words so i can afford to be contemptuous of them. as a commodity they are difficult and unobliging and suck. on several occasions i have become severely disorientated and

have lost my sense of direction and have become lost in the cracks, fissures, crevices, interspaces in the human vocabulary. as an entity then, i was not unhappy...

### III

words have the propensity to fluidity and therefore hark back to man's primeval fear of water; he was always climbing bare-arsed up trees to get away from the stuff. and one suspects that the fluid quality of words suggests this primal fear to the user. this may account for the seemingly unaccountable and mysterious ineptitude that strikes many out of the blue and leaves them feeling like damned idiots. words have little ring-pull cans strapped to their backs which are unlabelled but must have a sublimity approaching the infinite and being regurgitated as the artificial and the ultimate... when you use a word incorrectly you get a little squirt of this stuff up the nose and you're fucked... not that one should be overly concerned about artificial derivatives, but nevertheless it pays to have an overview concerning those things which are liable to send reverberations through the fine and sensitive lining of the life one keeps warm and comfortable in the linings of the Sunday-go-to-meetings pants pockets...

### IV

words are prompt and carry a distinguished umbrella and have bad manners and abuse casual passers-by when the processes of locomotion between casual bodies causes them motion. i have known them at parties to purposely spill drinks all over the carpet and feverishly lap them up with the sharp angular edges of their letters sharply shearing off the exposed limbs of those humanoids also at the function – by golly, how the blood spurts, by golly.

words then, strange creatures, that never admit to sucking at the breast or being confused by the blind beasts of Babylon. i have yet to hear a word admit that it wanted a fuck or had piles, they seem to be aloof like a rupture or perhaps a chipped buddha or an old Chinese teapot that leaks tears and opium on the mantelpiece with a miniature monkey poking its head out every quarter hour in time with the grandfather clock that you keep locked up in the magical and diabolical tower that you keep in the cubicle that is labeled 'Do Not Disturb', between the No Man's Land between the ears. words...