

Drop into My Ocean

Siblings, brothers watching from our roost, gazing out at the islands and sea around us; we watch the clouds chase each other on the meniscus of the hotel pool. Then a sea breeze bends my mirror, rippling the return of the sun's glare. My perch is overlooking a garden maze of tiered staircases being worshipped by ferns, succulents, and delicate flowers. From above I realize the maze is not a trick or a game, but a squared, curled up, sleeping serpent forever connected and repeating.

I lightly sip from my Columbian coffee and notice the snake again circumventing the cup's rim. Pressed to my lips, the serpent can't resist an informal kiss, aquamarine eternity on silver embroidering, all resting on white, a polished porcelain background of snow.

It is the Greek symbol for infinity and this cultural décor can be found everywhere. The garden is subtle whence compared to others that I've seen. I trace the design with my eyes before turning the cup around and around in my palms.

I set down my cup and begin to wash off my consciousness. Instead, I fill myself with this pattern's seemingly intended awareness.

A right angle, within a right angel, repeating; a square takes form in the white space of the center, the squares repeat, & the space between must follow, too. I called you a squared snake; do you symbolize fate? Am I on those islands slithering in circles? No, surely I'm alone on a life raft going to, not from. I have a single sail. I am setting the kitchen table on my eternal cloth patterned like the ring I bought in Athens being turned with my thumbs' provocation.

Looking up, I see the same horizon, the constant ocean waves that rock the floating sails going to and from these spotted islands. They are all carefully, artfully nestled. Each island is adorned with orange cliffs that burn red when the sun declines. They are spotted with lush forests lined by narrow, steep streets being squeezed by stucco homes of more and more blue and white. I see the pattern of their painted walls and arches: kitchens lay with milk-colored table cloths, the smell of sea salt, and more winter-colored stone columns bearing infinity patterned tapestries to attract the eye; lest we forget the marble, etched with this Greek repetition, a reminder circulating the imagination and the real.

The Earth is round, another sign. Visions; I see centuries of sailing merchants with the finest wives money can buy. Look at their long lines of able virgin sons and musing daughters all entertaining hopeful potential suitors to lengthen their lines of genesis. Follow the parallel and end at your origin. They all take turns adorning this right-angled repetition before making their final ninety degree downward about face.

Each step of the garden's maze repeats a silent rhythm, each step beckons: *Come up to your room or down for a drink; come, descend to the pool, fall further to the beach or wade into the water and end up where you started. Drop into My Ocean.*

By Mark J Sutherland