

The Mountain and The Storm

(Executive Dysfunction)

It's funny. Of all the things I have to do,

Shouldn't writing be easy?

It is something I love so much, and yet— when I sit down to put words on the page, it is as if I am climbing a steep mountain while dragging a stubborn child behind me.

I spend more time pulling, trying desperately to keep us both from falling, than I do moving forward.

I try to grab the next handhold and pull myself up, but one of my hands is already occupied. When I manage to grab on, the rocks cut my skin. I try to take a step, and my companion decides that now is the time to cling to my legs.

And then, abruptly, they see something up ahead. A butterfly, or a rock, a plant, and they scramble towards it, pulling me carelessly after them.

If I am lucky, their interest latched on to what I already wanted to do. Then for a moment we can run up the mountainside and the words flow like water. All too often, the object of interest is off to the side. Some scrap of an idea, a project, something to read or watch, and now it is all I can think about.

Often, they get close enough to see it and find they don't care to reach their destination, and now I am stuck again with yet another thing unfinished.

Am I frustrated that they couldn't go where I needed to go, or relieved that we moved at all in the first place? I can't decide.

Sometimes there is a storm moving in, a deadline, and there is only so long to get to shelter before it hits.

Maybe, through some combination of bribes, outside assistance, and willpower, I manage to drag us up and reach my goal in time. More likely, I struggle to hoist my companion onto my back in an adrenaline fueled panic only hours before the storm hits and keep them there long enough to reach shelter before I collapse.

Most common of all, the storm hits while I am struggling up a cliff or chasing a butterfly or looking in the wrong direction, drenching me and making the slope slippery. But I can't afford to wait it out— there is another storm on the horizon, and another, and if I cannot get ahead of this one they will overtake me too.

This isn't just about writing, anymore. It is about living, about knowing there are things you desperately need to do and yet no matter how hard you try there is a wall you cannot get past. It is about overwhelming dread as you look up the mountain to the nearest shelter and it's not even that far away but there is something locking you in place and words ringing in your ears, *I'm out of time, I'm out of time, I'm out of time, I'm wasting time, I need to move* but you simply, frustratingly, horrifyingly *can't*. And you are drenched by the storm.

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