

The Mystery of Oneself⁴⁵⁸

Sonia Gordo García⁴⁵⁹

Roselyn found herself in front of an old, abandoned house, standing like a silent and solitary island in the middle of nowhere with a skeletal porch that had missing floorboards, and which creaked intensely with the light air, there was a haunting yet non-existent melody coming out of that house, was it something truly real? Was it her own imagination trying to confuse her? Was there a reason why she was there?

All she knew was that she had woken up that morning, had gone to her classes, had talked with her friends, had gone for her daily run... But suddenly and unexpectedly she had found herself there. She remembered having woken up there after her usual nap, so, was it a dream? Was she dreaming? The only way to find out the truth was to go inside and see if there was something, a clue, a reason that could explain what she was doing there.

She opened the front door and, after taking a deep breath in order to calm herself, she finally entered the house; there was a sense of abandonment that disturbed her, she felt as if the essence of life had completely disappeared years or even centuries ago, the air inside was quite thick and almost impossible to breathe.

Roselyn decided to walk through the empty house. As she walked, she realized how rooms lay frozen in time, how cobwebs adorned the corners, how the sunlight filtered through the broken windows. Finally, she decided to go to the backyard where she found an enormous well which completely caught her attention as it was not common to see these objects in modern houses nowadays and the only well that she had ever seen (living in a big city) was the one that used to be in her grandparents' house. As she approached the well, she started

⁴⁵⁸ Recommended Citation

Gordo García, Sonia. "The Mystery of Oneself." *JACLR: Journal of Artistic Creation and Literary Research* vol. 12, no. 2, 2024, pp. 178-182:

<<https://www.ucm.es/siim/journal-of-artistic-creation-and-literary-research>>

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⁴⁵⁹ **CONTACT:** Sonia Gordo García <soniagor@ucm.es>

hearing an ongoing melancholic melody coming out of it, so she decided to take a look curiosity and excitement were running through her

veins as she couldn't comprehend what was going on. But whatever it was, she was sure she was going to find out in that moment. Or, at least, she hoped so.

When she looked into the well, she was expecting to see simple darkness and maybe some water deep down, but what she saw surprised her greatly. At the end of the well there was a small light and beside that light there was a key, which seemed like a key to one of the rooms from that house.

And then, she remembered.

There was a room which she had tried over and over to open but was unable to, no matter how strongly she had pushed in order to open that door, it was impossible; but now, if she was able to get that key, she would be able to open the door, she was closer to the truth. Once she had the key between her hands, she climbed up that well and went straight to the room she couldn't open before, she introduced the key and was able to unlock the door. Thus, she pushed it slowly and cautiously not knowing what to expect, not knowing what she would find on the other side.

She truly couldn't believe what she was seeing, was her mind trying to trick her? Her face was a true reflection of her confusion of what (or who) was standing in front of her. It was none other than herself, when she was younger, who was also straightly looking back at her with a bewildered yet amazed look on her face. Roselyn felt a discomfort growing from her chest which was starting to spread all throughout her body, an inhuman pain was starting to expand, trying to take control over herself. Her feelings, her emotions were so out of control that she didn't know how to respond, what was she supposed to do? How was she supposed to act? How was she supposed to *feel*? Was she out of her mind? Had she gone insane? Was it some kind of joke from her friends? She decided to close her eyes.

Inhale.

Exhale.

Slowly, slowly, slowly...

Breathe.

She had the control, she thought. That little, indefensible little girl was not going to physically hurt her, she had had time to do so already, and she hadn't. She was standing there just looking while holding a small little stuffed animal in her hands, waiting, perhaps for her to speak up, to say something. And so, she did, Roselyn decided to approach the little human creature that was herself and spoke out loud, trying hard for her voice not to break.

"Hey, I don't really know how to start this conversation... But what is your name?" Roselyn asked as she got on her knees so that she could be the same height as the little girl.

"My name is Roselyn, but you already know that, *don't you?*" The girl replied while an innocent smile started to appear on her face.

Roselyn was taken aback by this response.

"You know that I am *you*, but younger. I can tell by your face and the way in which you reacted when you were finally able to open the door. I was waiting for you, but I didn't know the time where I would finally be able to see you would arrive so soon..." As she finished talking, her voice seemed to fade away and get lost inside the room.

"But how do you know that I know all of that? Besides, it is impossible that you are who you claim to be! There is only one me, the present me; the me that wakes up in the morning and goes to class, goes out with her friends... You are not supposed to exist in this chronological line, am I going insane? Is that it?" Roselyn was starting to be filled with an anxiety that was not letting her breathe correctly, which was making her feel extremely dizzy, she stopped looking at the girl's grey eyes and started looking at the floor trying to prevent an attack from happening.

"But... Roselyn, who says this is the real world?" The little girl answered back "who says this is not a mere dream? Well, I would like you to know that this is not a dream exactly... You are currently fighting against death, it depends on you if you want to fight and go back to your reality or if you want to stay in this house with me, with all your memories and with

those who are no longer in your reality, physically. It truly depends on you, I am just a simple piece from the puzzle, *you* get to choose.”

“But I don’t understand... I don’t remember an accident happening, I don’t remember something terrible happening to me to end up here...” Roselyn was trying hard to organize her mind, trying to think of something that could have happened before she appeared there, but nothing came to her mind.

“Are you sure about that? Think deeply, you know the answer, you know *why* you are here and *how* you got here. Don’t you remember the pills?”

Pills? She was confused, she didn’t remember anything about some pills, unless... Wait, was the little girl referring to the sleeping pills? The ones she had taken as a way to... Oh, right. She finally understood. She had taken some pills to stop being, to cease her existence, to no longer be on earth, how had she forgotten about that? After her realization she looked directly at the girl’s eyes, *her* eyes.

“I remember...” her voice was so weak that she didn’t know how long she was going to last before starting to let her tears fall down her face. Unconsciously, she touched her arms underneath the purple, oversize t-shirt she was wearing, tracing the silhouettes of past scars that she had inflicted on herself some months ago as she was trying to deal with life.

“I am just a part of your mind, I was simply the one that had to introduce you to this place but before I leave I do want to leave you a clear message: I know life can be hard and I know things do not always go the way we planned them to, but just remember there is always hope and there is always something to look forward to or someone that is willing to help you. There is a beautiful world out there filled with surprises, things you have not yet seeing and incredible people you have not meet yet. But answer a question for me, please, if you had the chance to hurt me, would you?”

“Of course, I wouldn’t! How can you even think that?!”

“Then, why do you do it to your current self? At the end of the day, *I am you*, I am a part of you, each time you hurt yourself, you’re not only hurting your current mature self.”

And as soon as she finished those words, she completely banished away, leaving Roselyn confused with multiple questions and wondering if there would be more people to talk to there. She knew she had to choose between her options fast, she didn't have all the time in the world to make up her mind, but she also knew that it was not an easy choice. Whatever she would choose, would only have an impact on herself, or at least, that is how she viewed it.

Notes on contributor

Sonia Gordo García

CONTACT: <soniagor@ucm.es>