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She was delicately young and white. Her long red hair, streaked with burnt auburn, was curled upon her breasts. Her far-away, clear sky-blue, virgin eyes and freckled nose turned round at me. She saw me standing there – watching her splash her face – intruding silently, uninvited, dangerous perhaps, and so she turned away. Her arms wrapped round her breasts.

‘I didn’t see you there,’ she called to me.

Her legs were like two ribbons in a waterfall.

‘If I disturb you, I’ll go.’

‘You don’t disturb. You interrupt.’ She shook her long curls back, wetting her neck.

‘I’ll wait for you,’ I boldly said.

‘But not there. If you wait there for me, then I’ll wait here for you.’

‘You mean, I must come in?’

‘You saw me first like this, and I was unaware. Now I must see you just like me. I’ll wait right here for you.’

So I dropped off my clothes.

And there we were, two white ones, standing stiff, toe-frozen in the stream. She looked at me, her first good time, up and down, her gaze stopping an instant merely, lingering just below my waist.

No reaction showed on her face.

‘Now you’re paid back in kind,’ she said. ‘I’ve raped you with my eyes.’

‘I did not mean to rape you in any way. I came on instinct, really.’

I was pulled. A minute ago I was asleep. And when you woke me with your scent, I had to follow.'

'Dog-like!' she teased me.

'If I had fallen back to sleep, or run away or just walked on, what would you have thought?'

'That I could then continue bathing in peace, and find, tomorrow, a remoter place.'

'You would have thought, "He's not a man," or wondered, "Am I not a woman yet?"'

'Have you come to reproach me or to be a friend?'

'I've come to bathe with you.'

'Then we shall bathe.'

She made no effort now to hide herself. She smiled, bent over, hair now tumbling back across her breasts and covering them; she cupped her hands and splashed me up and down. The water stung. I felt my manhood shrivel in the cold. I wondered if she saw it shrink away.

'You've less courage than me, you cheeky boy.'

'Than *I*,' I teased her.

'Than *I*! – your highness, if it pleaseth thee,' she giggled.

'It's thee who pleaseth me,' I teased her more.

She went on with her bath, turning away. Her hips were two rose petals, pink with cold. Her legs were spread. She shook her head, sent spray around her like a parasol. She brought her feet together and turned round and round. A pinkness swirling. Pink thighs and hips, pink fingers, nipples, nose – a spring-rose pink, her cheeks. And seeing her turn round this way – taut hips, curved breasts, flat wafer tummy, water-studded reddish pubic hair, nipples pointed hard and high, white pretty, pretty face and growing smile – I felt my cold and shirking manhood come alive. It grew the more she turned.

She stopped and looked at me, looked right at it.

'The cheek! Charming! At least I know now you're a man. I had wondered for an instant there!' she said with feigned relief.

‘You know, it’s just the cold . . . it’s all well known,’ I stammered, hopeless, facing her and growing longer still. I thought to turn away.

‘Well, I don’t mind as long as you keep it at a safe distance. Maybe it’s like Pinocchio’s nose. You must have lied to me.’

‘*You* made it grow.’

‘Yes, like I drew you with my scent, I suppose,’ she mocked. ‘But thank God I don’t have one of those. Imagine, something beyond control between one’s legs!’

And together we laughed.