PSYCHE: CONVERSATIONS

A Series of One-Act Plays

By

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For Psyche, our soul in space.
THE ONE IN WHICH THERE ARE NO MIRRORS LARGE ENOUGH AND SO WE MUST FIND ANOTHER KIND OF REFLECTION

[NARRATOR is sitting cross-legged on the moon. EARTH spins and spins. As they chat, NARRATOR skips rocks across the sky when waiting for EARTH to come back around.]

EARTH
Tell me, what have you found that has you so curious about that asteroid out there?

NARRATOR
Do you know what a mirror is?

EARTH
I do. Though, there has never been one large enough for me.

NARRATOR
We have found the reflection of your soul out there.

EARTH
I am discovering myself.

NARRATOR
But, there are limits. Why do you think we have invented mirrors? X-rays? Made ourselves see-through? We want to know.

EARTH
You are always wanting. Why are you wanting to know me?

NARRATOR
It’s our nature, isn’t it? To ache to discover. Your center is unexplored territory. Too hot, your heart is.

EARTH
And Psyche is what you’re looking for in me?

NARRATOR
We think so. As they say, “When you cannot search within, you must explore without.”

EARTH
Who says that?

NARRATOR
We do. I do.
EARTH
If I knew your language, I would help.

NARRATOR
I know. But, you know only the language of yourself. It’s is alright. We have found another way.

EARTH
I see.

NARRATOR
We hope to see soon.

EARTH
You and your hope. It warms me.

(EARTH spins slowly. NARRATOR skips a rock. One, two, three, four. The EARTH comes back.)

I bless you. Go off in search of my reflection. I would love to know what it feels like to be see-through.

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THE ONE IN WHICH WE MEET A CHILD AND THEIR EYES TURN SKYWARD FOR THE 100,000TH TIME BUT THIS TIME IT IS DIFFERENT

[A CHILD is laying back in the grass in an infinite field. Her hands tangle in the grass. Above there is sky. The NARRATOR sits nearby, smiling.]

CHILD
What is so great about the sky?

NARRATOR
It is endless.

CHILD
So is this field. The ocean. So am I.

NARRATOR
It is unknown.

CHILD
So am I. You don’t even know my name.

NARRATOR
It is new, every single day.

CHILD (shrugging)
So am I. Yesterday, I liked pink. Today it hurts to look at.
NARRATOR
Out there in the distance is an asteroid made of the same stuff as what’s miles below your hands. A soul out in the darkness, and we want to know what it looks like.

(CHILD drops the grass in her fingers, some of it clinging. She tilts skyward.)
NARRATOR (CONT’D)
It is out there, aching to be known.
CHILD (softly)
I know how that feels.
NARRATOR
That’s what’s so great about the sky.
CHILD
Does it have a name?
NARRATOR
Psyche.
CHILD (mouthing silently)
THE ONE IN WHICH THE EARTH AND PSYCHE PLAY GO-FISH

[There is a table. A stack of cards in the center. EARTH sits at one side. PSYCHE sits at the other. They each have a hand of cards in front of them.]

EARTH

Do you have any iron?

(PSYCHE hands a card over.)

PSYCHE

Do you have any nickel?

(EARTH hands a card over.)

EARTH

Do you have any nickel?

(PSYCHE hands a card over.)

EARTH

Do you have any iron?

(PSYCHE hands a card over.)

EARTH (sighing)

This is useless. We have the same cards.

PSYCHE

Same core.

EARTH

Maybe. You look different than me, though.

PSYCHE

There was an accident. I am a survivor.

EARTH

Ah! You’re hope.
THE ONE IN WHICH WE CONVINCE A STRANGER ON AN ELEVATOR TO DREAM

[STRANGER enters the elevator on the 16th floor. NARRATOR is already inside. They nod to each other. STRANGER asks NARRATOR why he’s in the building. NARRATOR begins to talk about Psyche.]

STRANGER
Oh, yeah? What’s all that going to cost?

NARRATOR
In comparison to other things? It’s low-cost. But, I’m more concerned with what it’ll cost us if we don’t go.

STRANGER
Meaning?

NARRATOR
All those possibilities. Knowledge. The wonder. Isn’t that what we should be seeking?

STRANGER
Sure. In my dreams, maybe. But this is reality.

NARRATOR
This is a chance for the dream to seep through. Do you have any children?

STRANGER (lighting up)
We’ve got a baby on the way. Any day now and she’ll be here.

NARRATOR
Don’t you want her to be surrounded by wonder?

STRANGER
More than anything.

NARRATOR
Then we must keep finding wonderful things.

(Then, between them, an understanding.)
THE ONE IN WHICH PSYCHE INVITES US TO TEA

[NARRATOR speaks to PSYCHE. PSYCHE speaks back.]

NARRATOR
How does it make you feel, knowing that we are coming?

PSYCHE
No one has ever seen me up close. I think I want that. To be seen. I don’t know what that feels like.

NARRATOR
Sometimes it is scary. Mostly, it is kind. To be seen is to be known.

PSYCHE
I want that, more than anything.

NARRATOR
The whole world is going to see you, after this.

PSYCHE
And love me?

NARRATOR
And find hope in you.

PSYCHE
Even better.

NARRATOR
So, can we come? Will you give us permission? Let us see you up close? We promise we won’t touch you.

PSYCHE
Now? You must. You must.
About Psyche

Psyche is both the name of an asteroid orbiting the Sun between Mars and Jupiter—and the name of a NASA space mission to visit that asteroid, led by Arizona State University. The mission was chosen by NASA on January 4, 2017 as one of two missions for the agency’s Discovery Program, a series of relatively low-cost missions to solar system targets.

To learn more about Psyche and the Psyche Mission—A Mission to a Metal World, visit: https://psyche.asu.edu/