

7-15-2008

When Pachelbel Went to Sea

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Recommended Citation

Sparenberg, David (2008) "*When Pachelbel Went to Sea*," *The Mythic Circle*: Vol. 2008: Iss. 30, Article 12.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mcircle/vol2008/iss30/12>

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insulted that she apparently preferred fish to them. Henry found a cave in the hills one day and went down into it, never to emerge. He found a cold mountain stream there and paddled in it night and day.

Legend has it that Henry followed his stream underground until it reached the sea and that he met Astrid there. No one knows this for certain, however. The only valid historical source was the fisherman with the pearl head. He lived a very long time and seemed to have a deep knowledge of these events. He was the only person to have had a conversation with and to touch Astrid during that period, and it was thought by some that he had never given a full account of their meeting. He cherished his memory of Astrid even though their encounter had been brief and he had not acted with dignity. He did nothing to counter rumors over the years that he engaged in a supernatural correspondence

with her. Whether it truly occurred or he simply enjoyed being the subject of such speculation was never known. He lived longer than even the last child born in the village. The villagers had stopped making them, and the streets grew lonely. After many years the village was abandoned altogether, and except for the fisherman, anyone who had been a contemporary of Henry and Astrid had died. Now living in not unsatisfying isolation, the fisherman would grudgingly declare to his rare visitors, when asked, that it would have been nice if Henry and Astrid really had met again, but he was not impressed with Henry and always said of him, "He threw his chance away." But this was merely the idle opinion of a man impugning his rival. At any rate, whatever remained of the truth passed with the fisherman, who left no record of himself and died shortly before the interstate highway was extended to the seaside.

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When Pachelbel Went To Sea

by
David Sparenberg

It was a lovely day in the mid of May, when the crazy-free musicians went out to play. They set up out of doors on a bulbous ledge overhanging the constant sea and played Pachelbel—the ethereal, spiritually teasing and delicate Canon D—to the accompanying surf; the tide curling in and curling out along the stout and bartered shore. The underscore of percussive sand and pungent salt-foam breathed long and low a whoosing sound.

Costumed clouds moved on the sky like rowboats manned by lazy crews. The musicians smiled

amid disciplined strings that exercised like slow fire, weaving soulful dreams on sun and ocean driven breeze. The star peeked in and out of layers of purple haze, spreading, on the ocean's rocking bed, a kingdom's profusion of liquid gold. Ah! Surely a miracle was happening, as fire and water wed!

The slender sailboats' sails were down, as the western horizon ignited. Boatmen dragged their scudding hulls ashore; the roll of tide washing their naked, encrusted feet. Their bronze arms gilded as they met

the sky face to face. How sweet the blindness of that brilliant grace!

And angels—astonishingly revealed—danced with agile abandonment on the bubbles of Baroque. Even the dark and brooding shark, alienated and self-hating, in sulking rings around a sacrifice of blood, heard, from afar, echoes of that harmony, and wondered what it was to smile.

The whales already knew...The day that Pachelbel went to sea.