

Mother and Ants



A tall, slender redwood is swaying gently in the breeze. Her feet are firmly planted, but her legs and torso are pirouetting gracefully in a slow lullaby to her leaf-babies. She is a young mother, no more than 50 years of age. Like Durga, the Hindu goddess, she has many arms; but unlike Durga, these arms are holding neither swords nor severed human heads. They are holding life. She offers armfuls of her infants to the warm morning sunlight as she croons to them.

She also plays hostess to a long Conga-line of ants who scurry vertically up and down her chocolate-colored bark. These ants are no respecters of gravity, unless it is the gravity of their mission. They adjust to her swaying, mindful of naught, save their urgent business. When two of them meet, they exchange a high-five with their antennae. But this is no idle chatter; rather, like a high-speed modem, they download megabytes of information about the trail ahead, the resources to be found there, the impediments and the predators that lurk en route, the state of affairs at home, its needs and timeline.

How many millions of years have these twin dramas played to an empty auditorium? Is it true that, "...many a rose is born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air"? Am I the only witness? Was the drama wasted before I noticed? Does it not matter that a resting mountain lion may once have happened upon such a scene? Or, perhaps, God is fully content to be the only one in the audience?

But I *did* see and I *have* noticed – and so *I am* changed. Did the ants notice me noticing them, or the redwood observe me observing her? Now I have moved on and so has the mountain lion. God, once more, has the auditorium all to Himself. I think I heard Him chuckling as I was leaving, because only a true child can fully celebrate its own creativity.

Namasté,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Seán". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Namasté,".

Tír na nÓg
February, 2015