

The Great Wave

By

Stephen Kane

Week Fifty Two of Orbital Creativity 2011

Stevie Kane
The One Light Collective
3055 Columbus Ave NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418
USA

EXT. IZU PENINSULA, JAPAN - 1830.

HOKUSAI, 25, a fisherman wearing peasant's clothes, lifts boxes of live fish from a large wooden vessel to the small FAST BOAT tied up beside.

He moves methodically, around his MANY COLLEAGUES, as the cargo is loaded.

He sets one box down and takes a break, looking off into the distance:

The snow-capped peak of MOUNT FUJI broods in the distance.

He cannot tear his eyes away.

INT. HOKUSAI'S HOME - DAY.

In a simple hut, Hokusai moves toward the door.

By the lintel, a small WRAPPED CLOTH PARCEL.

He turns to the side.

There, sitting on her heels, looking out an open shutter is his wife, CHINATSU. She is also dressed simply.

She stares wistfully at Mt Fuji in the distance.

Hokusai looks back at the door.

HOKUSAI

In times past you have bade
farewell at the door. Is this how
it is to be, now, and forever?

Nothing.

He turns to her.

HOKUSAI (cont'd)

It was...

She interrupts without turning.

CHINATSU

I am only your wife. I cannot
question your actions. You must do
as you wish.

He turns back to the door, weary.

She continues to stare out the window, pain in her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CHINATSU (cont'd)
And so must I.

EXT. IZU PENINSULA - DAY.

Hokusai is broken from his reverie by a strike on the back from DAITARO, a larger man. He is thrown forward a little.

DAITARO
Concentrate!

Hokusai turns to him as Daitaro leans in.

DAITARO (cont'd)
You have urges, Hokusai, as all men do. Make an offering at the shrine upon our return and be thankful you were born a man, and have no need to worry about such transgressions.

Embittered, Hokusai returns to his work.

EXT. KANAGAWA PREFECTURE, JAPAN - AFTERNOON.

Hokusai rows in earnest.

He is only one of ten men each on three FAST BOATS, cutting speedily across the water.

Mt Fuji rocks lazily above the horizon.

To its right, nearer, a storm is broiling.

Daitaro rows in front of Hokusai.

DAITARO
Ah, here is your penance, Hokusai.

He chuckles to himself.

DAITARO
No matter, the people of Edo need their edomae zushi!

They row on.

EXT. KANAGAWA PREFECTURE, JAPAN - LATER.

The STORM is upon them.

Rain batters Hokusai hard in the face.

Mt Fuji rocks side to side, as if rolling in a half-pipe.

He rows harder than ever.

DAITARO

Maybe you should have made an
offering before you left,
tomodachi.

Hokusai keeps staring at the mountain.

EXT. KANAGAWA PREFECTURE, JAPAN - LATER.

Huge waves CRASH down around the three boats.

The men have succumbed to the storm and merely cling to
their oars, heads down, as the boats roll down the watery
hills.

Hokusai turns a rain soaked face up to the mountain, peeking
occasionally through the wave troughs.

He stares at it, as if to ask for assistance.

Suddenly the storm seems to STOP.

The rest of the men join Hokusai in looking upward.

BLANKETING the sound of the storm, fifty feet high, a wave
is cresting hard above them.

The white breaking points reach out like tendrils into the
sky, like claws, coming down on their prey.

The men begin SCREAMING, but Hokusai simply stares.

The wave takes over, nothing else can be seen. The world is
only a wall of water that comes closer and closer.

As the boat is pulled upward into the wave, it reaches down
and envelops them with its fingers, and Hokusai is knocked
overboard.

Underwater, things seems serene. Bubbles escaping from his
nose, Hokusai looks upwards at the chaos above.

Suddenly, a hand reaches for him.

(CONTINUED)

Hokusai is pulled from the water into the air.

The storm has stopped, the water is serene.

Hokusai looks up. There, floating just a few feet above the surface, is Chinatsu.

There, as Mt Fuji burns red in the distance across a yellow sky, they both float above water as still as marble.

He looks at her, she at him. His eyes are filled with shame and regret and he has to look away.

Slowly, she reaches a hand to his face, caresses his cheek.

His eyes turn back to hers.

She smiles at him then, a loving smile.

Shocked, he might begin to weep. He reaches back for her face.

The water level comes up slowly behind him.

They lower into the stillness in front of the mountain, making no ripples.

A hand reaches out from the water and drags Hokusai below.

Hokusai is pulled onto the fast boat, rain and wind battering him.

CHOKING, he turns to look at his rescuer.

Daitaro is shaking his head.

DAITARO
Don't give up so easily.

Hokusai grabs an oar and holds on tight.

INT. HOKUSAI'S HOME - DAY.

Chinatsu is sleeping.

Her eyes begin to flutter and she turns to her side.

Beside her, is a SMALL CLOTH PARCEL.

She reaches to it and daintily moves the cloth aside.

Lying in the middle is a SMALL COIN.

(CONTINUED)

She smiles and looks up. The smile drops away, but not completely.

Across the room, sitting cross legged, is Hokusai.

He smiles back.

FADE OUT.

Number of influences for this: It's New years Day, so i was thinking about rebirth, second chances and forgiveness. Then i was looking at the first writing in Genesis: "*In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*" Struck by the imagery, i was trying to think of a way to amalgamate these two thoughts when i went to the Minneapolis Institute of Art with a friend and saw *Under The Wave at Kanagawa*, which is probably the most famous piece of Japanese art there is. It depicts three fast boats about to be engulfed by a huge wave, as Mt Fuji sits in the distance. The coin at the end is the type of offering that might be left at a Shinto shrine, and so it is a nod to Chinatsu (Which means "a thousand summers". What a cool name.) In fact, this script might have the most imagery I've ever put into a piece of writing.