

The Rock

Once upon a time, there was a rock.

The Rock had stood
alone and proud
at the top of the mountain
for as long as anyone could remember.

It was bleak, and cold
and windy at the top of the mountain
but the Rock liked it that way.
Alone.

Up here, the Rock was king.
he could see all the colors
of the valley below him,

But it was, after all,
below him.

Formed in the heat of the earth,
hardened beneath tons of other rock,
he needed no one.

He was impervious to wind, snow, rain.
he reigned alone, strong,
lonely.

Though the rock was enormously strong,
the mountain
was not.

During the heavy rains
it melted away beneath him
and he began to fall.
And fall.

Down and down it fell,
farther and farther,
until it came to rest
in the valley.

When the storm ended
the rock found himself
in the very bottom of the valley.
The despised valley.

He longed so for his old perch,
high atop the mountain
that he couldn't even hear the
cry of the birds
or appreciate
the new warmth of the Sun.

After a long while, though
the rock began to enjoy
the warmer air
the milder winds.

He began to notice
all the life that surrounded him.
The flowers that nodded
in the soft breeze
the tiny crickets and lizards

He watched as the
animals reared
their young.

He watched as the
field produced its
flowers,

and especially
its grain.

Yes the grain.

He watched the cycle of growth.
The sowing of the seeds,
the sprouting of the shoots.
The way that they grew into
Long, graceful shafts,

The harvesting each year
as the days grew shorter.
The coming of new life each Spring
as the Sower sowed his seeds again.

As the years passed
the rock began to wish that
he might take some part
in the growing.
That he might be permitted
to produce grain of his own.

And each year,
the sower sowed
the seeds.

And then, one year
some seed fell
on the rock
where the lizard
came to sun himself.

But no sooner had
the seed fallen
than the birds came
to snatch it away.

Year after year
he watched as
the sower scattered
the seed,

covering him,
as well as the field.

But the seed that fell
on the rock,

Well, he felt as though
it were wasted.

At least,
he thought,
the birds were fed.

Year after year
he was frustrated.

Longing more and more
that he might be able
to hold onto the grain.

And year after year
his heart was broken.

Strange, he thought
one year.

I didn't know I had
a heart to break.

But there was
something else
that he did not know.

It wasn't only that
his heart was breaking.

The horrible crash
down the mountainside
had sent many tiny
cracks through his
impregnable rockness.

And each year,
as the Fall rains fell,
they crept into
the tiny crevices.

And each year,
as the water froze,
they widened the cracks
a little more.

Then, one year
after another summer
of frustration,
the water settled
into the cracks.

And when the snows came
the water froze.

The rock felt himself
splitting,
and splitting,
and splitting.

He wept as he felt
his vaunted strength
being sundered by
the tiny droplets
of water.

When the Spring
thaw came,

Well, he just
fell apart.

Tiny parts of the rock
fell all over the field.

The rock was
so ashamed.

He had never felt
so low,

so weak.

And worse than this,
worse, much worse,
each year
the pieces grew smaller
and smaller

until they were
only tiny grains
as of sand.

And each Summer,
as the Sun climbed
higher into the sky,

the rock prayed
that no one would
notice that he had
been brought so low.

Frankly,
no one seemed to care.

The sower kept on
sowing his seeds.

The soil went on
growing its grain,

The harvests came
each year.

Then, after he
had grieved enough,
when the Spring
came again,

The rock thought,
"Aha!"

"This year, at least,
though I may have been
brought low,
but at least
I may keep the seeds!"

And indeed,
as the seeds settled
to the earth,
some fell again
upon the rock,

or rather,

among the tiny
pieces of him.

And low and behold,
when the birds came
they could not find
the seeds.

And when the rains came
the seeds began to sprout!

"Aha!" cried the rock.

"This year,
I too will bear fruit!"

And the shoots grew up,
and the rock loved them,
cherished them.

And the Sun got hotter
and hotter.

Warming the rock
but scorching the
tiny plants.

And they withered
and died.

And the rock wept
again.

His heart was broken
again
for love of the
tiny seeds.

"Why?" he asked.

"Why has the sower
given me seeds
if I cannot
sustain them?"

But there was
no answer.

Only another winter
and another Summer.

Year followed
upon year.

Freeze upon freeze.

Reducing the rock
to tinier
and tinier pieces,
enabling him
to hold a little
more of the rain.

And each year the
Sower would come.

Sowing the seeds
again and again.

He never seemed
to lose hope.
Though year after
year the tiny shoots
would wither
again and again.
(For water alone
was not enough.)

And the rock's
heart broke,
again and again.

But as the years
passed,

something else
was happening.

Unseen by the rock,
the tiny shoots
were mixing with
the tiny bits of rock
and decaying.

And each year this
new matter,
mixed with the bits
of rock,
grew thicker
and healthier.

And each year,
as the rock grieved
the death of the
tiny shoots,

He grew more
and more fertile.

And then the Springtime
came when the rock
had grown small enough,

unnoticeable enough,

and he had lost enough
of the tiny shoots

that he was fertile.

He had almost
given up hope.

Each year the shoots
had grown a little
taller.

But still, they had
failed.

And died.

And this year,

this year, they seemed
to grow taller still.

Was he mistaken?
Or were they truly
taller than
they had ever been?

Were those tiny heads
of grain forming at the
tops of the shafts?

Were those more of the
blessed seeds forming
and waving to the
world in the soft winds?

Yes!

Yes they were!

His tiny seeds were
bearing fruit!

The rock looked about.

"Look! Look at me!

I'm growing seeds!
I'm bearing fruit!"

And then he realized,

That he was now so
small and soft
that he was
no longer visible.

He was so filled with
the old matter left
from his disappointments
of old,
that his old color,
his old texture
were gone.

Gone.

And

For the tiniest of moments
he was tempted to weep.

No one would ever see
that he had borne fruit.

No one,
that is,

but the Sower.