

Plot “The Riddle” + Plot “Man versus Nature”

In one sentence: An archeologist and a hunter, separated in time through thousands of years, thinking of each other, guessing each other’s existence – both looking at the same thing: a cave wall filled with drawings.

Title:

“THE CONVERSATION”

- elaboration / draft of prologue’s story line -

Long before the invention of the wheel there was a young man, a traveler, who had an epiphany. It just happens that he suddenly understands something no one in his tribe has understood before; it excites him, urges him to tell, to explain. But he will not be able to do so, this he knows.

He is on his own, far away from home fires, in nameless territories. He’s out of food, out of water, full of thirst. And a patient, persistent predator has followed him for days now, awaiting his surrender.

Panic came and past; a terminating, final calmness has spread within him. He will not make it back home; there is no strength to cross either that valley or those mountains. So he stays put, in a dry, rocky landscape; sorrowful, that he will not be able to communicate his realization.

There is a cave he now slowly explores. He has no actual hope, but there he looks for water. What he finds are drawings – made by people long gone. Tools of art: pale soft rocks. He is fascinated; he starts to imitate their illustrations.

While he does so he becomes absorbed in thought, he imagines his dead body lying on the cave’s floor, being found

not by the predator but by his friends who went out searching for him. He imagines them examining his drawings. So he begins to draw things familiar to them – he wants to be understood! Will they understand?

He thinks of his brother who still struggles with the procedures of hunting. So he tries to describe how to do it right, how to plan it well, how to corner, how to run.

He is pleased with himself envisioning his brother's future son coming here to learn. His mind goes further and he grasps that his and the older images could live much longer than his whole tribe – as the other drawings have survived their people.

He closes his eyes and pretends to be a stranger trying to understand those pictures on the cave's wall. It helps him to evaluate his drawing. What questions would that stranger have?

In the year 1910 another young man, a modern man, twice the age of our traveler, actually does stand in front of those drawings, having many of these questions the traveler had anticipated. The modern man, in turn, tries to visualize the artist that had been here 30,000 years before him.

His eyes are searching the wall, they keep finding new images. And it appears that there is a golden thread to it. The deeper he goes into the cave, the more coherent they become. And often when there's an image leaving him puzzled, a following image seems to provide an explanation. As if the artist had stepped back to read his own message and then decided to add more content. Sometimes it even feels like a conversation: The thirsty traveler foresees the modern man's questions – and answers.