

Susquehana

by Bernie Mojzes

Weave through the narrow main (only?) street of Port Deposit, paths of water and iron to the left, brick and rock to the right, buildings built into the stepped cliff. Past the marina, past the VFW, a couple spots by the side of the road. I pull into one. Loki and I follow the path to the water's edge. Once paved, nature has grown into and over it's neat boundaries: the macadam is hardly visible, cracked and missing under dirt and weeds, poison ivy held back not by the efforts of earlier attempts to impose order onto nature, but by the everyday wear of fishermen's feet.

By the river's edge, Loki finds a hole from which clouds of tiny insects rise, and she strains at her leash to get in and explore it fully. She's already rolled in fish water at the marina (which will make the ride home interesting); she's not getting muddy too. I stand under ancient maples, ivy-covered (shiny leaves warning impending danger), tops splintered and tattered from forgotten storms, gnarled trunks wider than my outstretched arms. They lean out over the river, some almost parallel to the surface, limbs trailing in the water, which swirls around them.

The river is huge. From afar, it is deep and wide, slow and majestic, hinting of secrets that it will not tell. I guess it is perhaps not so deep – I see no large ships on this river – and perhaps that has saved it from the sorts of abuse to which we have subjected the Delaware River. But deep enough, fast enough. There is no swimming against this current; the water breaks white where the tree limbs dip into the flow, and on rocks further out.

I have not yet touched her. She seems as yet beyond that. I shall have to woo her more ere she will allow such intimacy.

Loki strains to get into the hole and find whatever creatures might live there. Hey. Time to go. We've still got a good drive ahead of us.