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## To Taste the Rains

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## To Taste the Rains

In the early fall of that last year they came to the house by the sea. It was a large, affable house, thickly surrounded by trees and built on a high hill overlooking the ocean. Smells of autumn and of oceans flew quietly past them as they stepped out of the car. Around them, the sky and the sea and the land were in unison, moving along at a slow, methodical pace, moving forever as if no one would notice their serenity.

On the three hundred yards between the house and the beach, pine and other young plants and bushes grew on dunes that rolled down to the edge of the sea. They walked down the hill to a winding, sandy path which was covered with pine needles and bordered with beach grasses.

Their heavy shoes sank into the sand, making the last steep dune a struggle, a slow-motion trudging dirge that finally ended with the explosion of the view of the sea. They stood for a time, looking out over the Atlantic, watching the waves incessantly battering the shoreline. When they caught their breath, they took slow strides on a long walk to the north, watching water reflect the sky, and shells frame driftwood on the beach.

"I bet you could find a wonderful landscape from the top of that cliff."

The man squinted, stretching up on his toes as if to improve his angle of vision.

"Maybe."

"Let's go and see."

"It's farther than it looks." His eyebrows contracted and he closed his eyes. "Maybe tomorrow."

The woman seemed disappointed, but said nothing. They stopped after a while and sat on the sand. It was still warm from the fading afternoon sun.

"Where you want to go—that's far too." She held her hair away from her face in the ocean wind.

"I know."

"I still think you're leaving to get away from me."

He lifted sand into his palm and turned it over, letting the grains drop back onto the beach.

"You know that's not true. How many times do I have to tell you? I'm the one who keeps asking you to come with me."