

Monologue—Jacob

Genesis 25, 33

(Jacob notices his brother Esau some distance away. This meeting is the first in many years.)

It's me, Jacob! Remember? Mama's boy. Your kid brother. You know, the shy, timid one. Remember me, Esau? I have a new name now. Israel. Pretty fancy. Named by God. Can you imagine? I can hardly ...

You're still looking good. Your firm posture, broad shoulders – those strong shoulders of an ox – your toned, rough-hewed body, athletic build ... Still in shape, even at 50? Still muscular, coordinated? Still the jock.

I see your sweat, even from here, that seeping perspiration. Proof of your work in the field, right? Your labour? Toil? Man's work. Outside. Always the provider, the hunter, the archer. Your dirty, soiled hands have always fed me. Even from an early age.

Everyone cheered, remember that, the day you stung your first boar. An arrow through the neck. Such aim, such poise as an adolescent. Father had a party.

No one helped me deliver my first calf, Esau. No one told me how; no one showed me ... I buried the cow. Alone. No one asked any questions ...

I'm the baby of the family. You are the older one. We wrestled in our mother's womb, fair and square, and I lost. Simple as that. I concede. But father's favourite? I never had a chance. Your land, wives, children, slaves, power ...

Am I to bow to your success? More in number than the hairs of my head are your sheep that litter the landscape. You own the area's prized cattle, cherished stallions. Hands down. Your name is known outside this country. "Oh, you're Esau's brother."

Yeah, I still compete with you. Even though I've often lost. Miserably.

But for a pot of stew, Esau, on a famished night, I stole your birthright. Took it from you. Remember? I cracked your shell. You're not invincible. With fake robes, a hairy costume, I stole your blessing. Tricked Dad. Burned you. I had the last laugh.

Until today.

Today, I recognize you. Even from a distance. I say, I remember you. Even after these many years. You're the same strong, rugged, handsome gentleman I envied, cheated and fled. And today four hundred men accompany you. You haven't changed. Not a bit. Popular and powerful as ever.

I'll turn around then. Walk back. Why relive the past? Uncover those wounds? Better we live apart. On opposite sides of the river. I didn't really expect things have changed. You stay here, and I'll go home, wherever that is. Don't come forward. I'll say my good bye from here.

You're approaching me. Esau, stay away. I don't want violence. Our families will get hurt. Be reasonable. I've sent gifts ahead; is that not good enough?

Please, stay away. Don't come after me. Turn around. I'll back off. Forgive my trespassing. You're too close. Please. Don't Esau Don't ... touch me. Don't hurt me. Don't kiss me. Kiss me?

You kissed me? Embraced me. You're not going to... You're not mad? There, you kissed me again.

Brother? Blood brother? Sibling? Twin?

Oh, let me kiss you too.

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