



Coast Range Chronicles 38: “Glass, Alone”

by

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We float on the glassy ocean. The sky is gray, the clouds thick and heavy, the horizon black. A massive storm is coming. Soon the wind will gust and the ocean will churn.

But right now it's perfect glass. Clean gray waves wrap around the cobblestone point. The lighting is eerie. Foreboding. The impending storm keeps others home. But we chanced it and here we float, alone.

A set arrives. We each catch a wave, gliding along the point and into the cove. The waves are perfect, arcing, freakishly symmetrical. We ride deep into the cove, exit, paddle back out, and catch more waves in a steady rhythm. We don't speak. There is nothing to say. Surf, paddle, float. Surf, paddle, float. That's all that matters.

Clouds thicken and the sky darkens. The first drops of rain fall. Wind gusts from the south, dragging us along. We fight the current and squint through sheets of spray.

Scattered raindrops turn to a steady pour. The wind gusts harder. Waves start to wobble and section. The surf turns quickly to junk. We catch waves to shore, hike up the point, and peel off our wetsuits in the parking lot.

The smell of wet asphalt reminds us of childhood, of sessions in the rain when nothing else mattered. When everything made sense.

The storm rages as we drive home. The ocean is shredded and blown. We've ridden the glass in the brief window the earth has given us. We are guaranteed nothing in life. So much of it seems bizarre and nonsensical. So much of it we dread. But, for a moment, we surfed the glass before the storm, alone.

And, for a moment, it's enough.