

Skipping Stones

A skipping stone! Oh, marvelous physics: allowing us the simple pleasure in seeing something we give birth and motion and power to go rifling over what we often see as such a fragile surface. There's never really dread when it comes to thinking if a stone we skip will fail on the first plunge, or the second, or third. Because the objective is to count the times the water acts like a magical trampoline. And if you fail the beach always has a high supply of the suckers.

But imagine if you found a stone-shaped piece of the finest and most densely packed diamond on a beach that you've never even been to before. It's so compact that holding it up to the sun causes a portal of rainbow and fractured light that leads to whatever world is beyond our own.

Keeping this precious diamond all to yourself would be worthless. You could put it on a pedestal or make some sort of jewellery out of it, I suppose. You can't sell it; because it turns to dust the moment another soul lays their hand upon it.

So we go to skip it.

And this time every skip matters. How many jumps are equal to what sort of reward? No one knows that. That's all in the magic; that's all in the spin and the skill. All we know is if explodes into the depths on the first or even maybe second skip we're in trouble. Or at least, we won't get to see what could have been.

But there are times when you can just tell (from all the normal stones you have skipped) as soon as it leaves your hand, as soon as the flight begins, that "it's gonna be a good one!" There's no arc, no twisting... just a streaking blur of a line like a Frisbee on a windless summer evening. The first jump is barely a kiss on the surface; the stone still has most of its energy.

So we reflect upon these thoughts as the beautiful rare and irreplaceable diamond gently exerts its mass in our palm. A perfect disc.

And we take position.

And we let her fly.

And beads of sunlight and rainbow spin out of it as she rockets towards the water, creating a tornado lightshow of pinks and blues and blasts of blinding white like tinsel on a Christmas Tree. Dazzling.

The first jump is barely a kiss on the surface.

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