

A Sea of Logic

by Joshua Learn

We pushed our raft into the Sea of Logic to see if we could stay afloat.

A biblical flood swamping forests and towns prompted us to create our two-man ark. With an economy of space in mind, we packed only the most nutritious, long-lasting food and all the tools needed to measure orientation.

After we set off, two distinguished scientists with an organized plan for survival, the sea was initially calm and we floated for many leagues. We had a sail we'd calculated would blow us to safety if the trade winds were right. With a pen and a few maps the numbers looked good, and for several days we traveled westwards.

Then one night the stars suddenly blinked out and shortly after the rain came down in a heavy curtain. For the first day we clutched to our maps and theories but a rogue wave bounced us briefly in the air and swallowed most of our precious tools. We were purged under direct exposure to the elements while lightning flashed around us, exploding waves with its stabbing slice. We held on for hours, clutching the wooden planks upon which we'd gambled our minds and living consciousness. On the second night of storm, our small hull was struck by the Driftwood of Unpredictability and our senses were completely jarred — for a long time I had no sense of space or direction. When daylight finally broke I discovered a few planks had broken free from our raft, the realm by which we stayed afloat had shrunken perceptibly. By the third night my rational broke down in an erratic moment and I tossed the binoculars high across the water in sacrifice screaming, "Take this offering, great Poseidon!!"

I awoke to the taste of salt in calm waters and couldn't remember whether the occurrence had been but a nightmare. I looked around to find the binoculars were gone but the theories still seemed sound — I must have hallucinated their departure. I broke into argument with my companion after I joked, "It seems Poseidon accepted my humble sacrifice."

"There is no Poseidon just as there are now no binoculars!"

The argument escalated until we dropped into cold silence, glaring at each other from opposite corners of the raft until sleep interceded. The

next morning we discovered the raft wasn't moving — we were anchored somewhere in the Eddies of Insanity.

We dipped into our rations in order to get our minds working but to no avail. Shortly thereafter we lost track of time — the notches my companion had been scratching into a plank of wood with his fingers had become blurred when his split nails splashed drops of blood across the measurements. The chart now read that we'd been afloat for four notches and two bloodstains. Through all of our arguments, neither of us could raise a satisfactory theory on what that translated to in standard measurement.

At night I hallucinated numbers and formulas; I chanted quotes of Hume and Rousseau to keep us afloat and expostulated astonishing theories on the origin of the cosmos. Then suddenly a clear vision struck me and I asked, "What if the Sea of Logic is only the single facet of a massive ocean?"

My companion threw up into the water — the clear water was now a blending of murk.

The next morning I achieved sudden enlightenment and dived down seeking pearls and other treasures resplendent as the fruits of understanding. I carried our only flashlight and scuba tank but I couldn't reach the seafloor. When I gave up and ascended, a vast shape moved close by my person and I panicked and dropped everything. I surfaced two meters away from our boat sputtering, "*Monster!*"

My friend pulled me aboard the raft and slapped me in the face. "Shut up, you fool! Don't you realize we've reached the reef? The Barrier of Science!" I looked outwards and surely it was so. Our minds clear, we paddled towards it with our hands and kicked with our feet but once we neared, we realized our great error in calculation. A moment later our raft was dashed against the sharp coral with the breaking of the waves. Wood flew everywhere and all we could do was gather the largest piece — no more than two square meters in size — and push off once more.

"We now have no food or water and there's no land in sight!" I exclaimed but my companion sagely countered:

"That statement is incorrect. There is water everywhere and we have an endless supply of food for thought."

We laughed hysterically as the sea spun us in spirals. Later that night, I awoke from sleep to the sound of my companion chanting pledges of undying love for the bare-breasted sirens he claimed were all around us. I looked out at the ocean but in the darkness my powers of observation were fuzzy. I tried to focus my pupils but I could see nothing in the darkness.

"But love can only exist if there is an object, and if he claims his

undying love, then it follows that the object *must* exist,” I said to myself unsurely. I couldn’t remember if it was a scholarly quote and if so, who had stated it. I was losing my support as the waves continued to toss. I lied down on the plank of wood and held my face against four notches and two bloodstains.

My companion had taken his eyes off the unknown ocean for an instant to watch me. His end of the raft had begun to weigh more heavily. “Is there no logic in love?” he accused.

“Damn you! I don’t know,” I answered as I lifted my face off the wood — water had begun to wash across my face.

In response to my question, he sat down and began ripping out his long hair. He wrapped it around a single pencil he’d managed to preserve in a pocket in his tattered pants. He jammed it into a small knot in the wood so that it stood upright like a miniature deity and bowed low before it. In between prostrations he glared up at me with the same accusing eyes while I took a silver coin I had preserved in my own pocket and rubbed it for good luck.

On our final night, we were chasing shooting stars by kicking the water with our feet from the end of the raft. We were trusting to a sudden omen my companion claimed to have received from rubbing his hands together in front of his hair-pencil deity, now dubbed ‘The God of Clarity.’ As we kicked I prayed to any gods or spirits that cared to listen to provide me with my own vision for guidance. Just then, a rogue wave picked up our humble vessel and flung it far from our minds. The clouds cleared from my eyes and I saw light.

