

## The Other Side

I was dreaming intensively when suddenly I opened my eyes and interpreted that it's 5 to 5. It's already going to be dawn. Big error. The clock hands are converse: hours are minutes and minutes are hours, so that it's 35 minutes to the break of dawn!

Attentively I leave my room to see the panorama of the sky.

"A turtle appeared," says Porfirio, the night watchman who is looking at me while walking; he was quietly waiting for me at the paved area for the sun beds right next to the pool.

"There!" I manage to answer.

"It is over there," and points West.

Another person coming from the beach and walking towards me says to Porfirio, "She is already digging. Let's wait until she will finishes." Afterwards he addresses himself to me, continuing, "She will start to lay eggs; I have come to inform you so you can go there."

"Yes, thank you," I reply. It seems that if I have an appointment.

I make my way through the sand; away from trees and paving I enter another reality. I see myself coated by the full moon, the breeze turning into a wind and the sound is of breaking of waves at the beach. Approximately 50 meters away I see an enormous shadow digging shovelfuls of sand. With just one heartbeat I find my awareness/consciousness in the middle of the cosmos. My heartbeat merges with the rhythm of ecology.

"Come and get closer", says Armando, the person in charge of the volunteers, who comes out every night to take care of the turtles laying their eggs.

"Now there is coming a green turtle which has a huge shell but a small head, and needs between one and a half hours to three hours to lay eggs and is more complicated. If it doesn't like the place or any noise or is annoyed by any light, it will go back to the sea."

Complicated with the turtles. They just accept the cosmos as a quiet witness to proceed with their creative act.

There are five volunteers from universities: four Mexicans and one American working. There is also an American couple who has come with us to observe. I sit next to them in the kayaks which are in the sand. It is necessary to kneel in absolute silence until the female turtle finishes digging her nest and starts laying eggs. By then it won't be risky anymore and you can get closer to watch.

This takes more or less fifteen minutes, when the female turtle starts to leave her hole in which she was digging before with her fins and comes towards us. Ten minutes later she starts grubbing again but something seems to be wrong and she keeps going slowly in our direction where we all are seated. No one moves, no one breathes ... until a little head and a huge shell with a history of two hundred million years on the planet, crosses majestically only 30 centimeters from my eyes and continues creeping in the sand for another 20 meters without discovering a place to rest so that she will be able to shovel the nest and lay her eggs. Exhausted, she goes back to the sea and disappears between the waves.

"Maybe she will come out again in two or three hours, or maybe tomorrow," says the person in charge, with a tone of being used to it.

I, who stepped out in my pajamas only to check the sky one-and-a-half hours before, know that I finished my date with the cosmos and can return to sleep.

I felt it last year when I saw turtles laying eggs for the first time, but now I know it with certainty, that here in this place, in front of Villas Akumal, between the sandy beach and the stars, there is an entry to the cosmos like in Machu Picchu, in Real de Catorce, or at the centenarian pyramids of Uxmal, Monte Albán or Teotihuacan. It's just that it's easier here: you wait in the sand, keep silence and wait to face a turtle, a millennial ancestry. When you least expect it, you are in the infinity of life.

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Akumal, land of the turtles

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