

ONE BOTTLE: THE 2009 CHARTRON ET TRÉBUCHET CHASSAGNE-MONTRACHET “LES EMBAZÉES”

BY JOSHUA BAER

The moon is a woman, but there is a man in the moon. What's he doing there? I decided to find out.

My investigation started in Berkeley, California. In Berkeley, knowledge flows out of people's minds the way water flows out of a spring. After following a tall, lanky, marginally disheveled grey-haired man through a grove of Ginkgo trees, I caught up with him at the base of the Campanile and tapped him on the shoulder. “The moon is a woman,” I said, “but there's a man in the moon. What's he doing there?”

“Excuse me?”

“You're a professor, aren't you?”

“Yes, I happen to be a professor. What business is that of yours?”

“I'm looking for the answer to the question.”

“Which question?”

“The one about the man in the moon. Do you know what he's doing there?”

“I teach engineering,” said the professor. “Talk to a classics professor.”

After Berkeley, my investigation took me to Tassajara Hot Springs in the Santa Lucia mountains east of Big Sur. At Tassajara I saw a Zen master. After following the roshi through a canyon lined with sycamore trees, I caught up with him and tapped him on the shoulder. The roshi had sensational eyebrows, big brown eyes, and a shaved head. He was wearing a black robe over a pair of Levis.

“The moon is a woman,” I said, “but there's a man in the moon. What's he doing there?”

“Don't tap people on the shoulder. Not around here.”

“Why not?”

“Because it might startle them. What are you doing here?”

“Visiting. Sitting. Taking baths.”

“And asking questions.”

“Is there something wrong with asking questions?”

“There could be. This is a monastery. Why did you ask me about the man in the moon?”

“You're an important guy. I thought you might know the answer. Do you?”

“There's nothing to say.”

“That's your answer? That's the best you can do?”

“Right here, right now, there is nothing to say.”

After Tassajara, my investigation took me to Santa Cruz, California, where I met the woman who later became my wife. Before we got married, we became friends with a lady who made paintings of angels. The lady lived on a farm in the Santa Cruz Mountains, at the end of a private road that wound its way up the side of a hill through a redwood forest. In the forest, it was so dark you had to turn on your headlights but then the road led you out of the forest and through a vineyard before it brought you to the barn where the lady kept her paintings.

The lady seemed to be imbued with arcane wisdom. So, after a few visits, I said, “The moon is a woman, but there's a man in the moon. What's he doing there?”

“The man is her lover.”

“He is?”

“Of course he is. One night, during the dark of the moon, he came

to her and made love to her. She liked it so much she decided to keep him forever. Two weeks later, when she went full, there he was, for all the world to see.”

The lady with the paintings of angels was a tough act to follow. Years went by before I resumed my investigation. In the meantime, my wife and I had two children, a girl and a boy. When they were little, they looked like the angels in the lady's paintings. My wife and I used to read to them. *Goodnight Moon* was one of their favorite books but it never occurred to me to ask them about the man in the moon.

After our children were born, we moved to Santa Fe so I could go to work in the art business. After two years of working at a gallery, I decided to open my own gallery. The day we opened, dozens of people came through the door. I met people from all over the world. Many of them were fascinated with New Mexico, with the art business, and with human nature. It was intoxicating, just being open for business.

One day, a young woman came in and put her résumé on my desk. Her résumé said she was “goal-oriented.”

“What are your goals?” I said.

“You're really putting me on the spot.”

“No, not really. I just want to know.”

“Right now I'm working as a waitress. It's good money, but I'm an artist. I'd rather be around art.”

After I hired her, we talked about the moon being a woman and the man in the moon but I never asked the young woman if she knew what the man was doing there. One morning, after I got to work, I found a drawing on my desk. In the drawing, the moon was rising over the mountains, and there was a man's face in the moon.

Which brings us to the 2009 Chartron et Trébuchet Chassagne-Montrachet “Les Embazées.”

In the glass, this wine is a clear, iconic gold. The bouquet makes you feel lucky—lucky to be alive and lucky to inhale the perfume of paradise while you're alive. On the palate, the 2009 “Les Embazées” delivers a combination of patience and urgency. The combination makes you want to do great things but also suggests that you have plenty of time. The finish is like a memory of all the people you've loved, rolled into one face, one smile, one astonishing pair of eyes.

After I tasted the 2009 “Les Embazées,” I told my wife that the moon was a woman but that there was a man in the moon. Did she have any idea what he was doing there?

“Waiting to be born.”

“Why do you say that?”

“All of the little men I've ever known who were in the moon were waiting to be born.”

As much as I like my wife's answer, my sense is that my investigation is not over. Maybe I'm delusional. Maybe the answer is that there is no answer. If that turns out to be the case, I'll be disappointed but at least I'll know the truth. In the meantime, my goal is to finish what I started. ♡

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