

I had the feeling they didn't want me in there. Maybe that was just me being insecure, I feel like people don't naturally like me. If I was wrong, maybe one of them would come out and get me. Maybe they did like me, because they had looked at me for a long time while we were walking.

I thought of those old French street signs that I had seen out on the coast. Was there an old guard of misplaced Frenchmen living out here, surviving in this wild? And then a detail of their clothing came to me as I stood there. New Balance. They had all been wearing identical shoes. I hadn't seen it in the cave, but as they walked, it was the tips of their shoes that gave it away, the tips of their shoes went up, like New Balance. And then I thought, so these weren't Frenchies at all, but some kind of a group or a clan that followed Steve Jobs, all dressed the same.

I went back into the cave and I stopped short, for it was empty. I walked slowly inside, but there was nothing there. My eyes adjusted, though, and fell upon a wooden lid in the middle of the cave wall on the side. I lifted it and climbed inside the tunnel behind it. I kept my foot in the lid for a moment to make a light inside, but the tunnel turned off so that I couldn't see where it went. I let the lid close and climbed on.

In a while, I reached another lid, so I pushed it open. I had come out on the side of the hill where I had first seen them sniffing around. There was no one here and it was still gray and murky all around me.

I walked back to my door and laid underneath it. I wondered if I should have run around the hill one more time, to see if they had gone back to the cave. But then I thought that, if they wanted to avoid me, they would have just crawled back into the hole again, and we could have been doing that over and over for some time. So it was better to just read my book and rest up. I could try to find them again tomorrow. I got out *Frances Johnson* and read about five pages before I fell asleep.

I had a dream that I was taking pictures of a piece of rope. And the rope was positioning itself in a lot of slinky positions. As I took photographs, I felt