

Stephen lifted the binoculars, focusing them on the vanishing point of the horizon. His attention was drawn to a faint mist hanging over the long valley corridor that came up from the mountains to the west.

He looked round at Mambo, who all at once had put a hand on his arm. The old man was standing with his other hand cupping his ear and his eyes intent on Stephen's eyes. He said, "Listen..."

Stillness and yet not stillness. Like the roll of faraway thunder or the pounding of a far-off sea, a low rumble advanced over the plains. Materializing out of the air above the horizon, a concentration of low-lying stratus clouds seemed to rise and vanish, float and fall apart.

With binoculars, Stephen saw that the formation was, in fact, not clouds, but an ascending haze which, as it swept into his field of vision, released first one form, then a second, a third: a thousand furious fleet figures pressing on the hinge of sound. The sky darkened; he felt a wash of dirt and acrid air, and then the detonation of hooves: in herds by the hundreds, zebra, streaked with grime and foam, running in a stream of wildebeest and antelope of which there seemed to be no end, running as one, leaping and surging, stunning the air with the clash of their hooves, stirring the earth into a great vortex of dust. Then, all at once, like an immense heaving door, they swung east, moving in flux, held to a center, chasing the wind.

Stephen lowered the binoculars and stood in amazement. Dazedly, he remembered Joyce quoting Newman:

*Whose feet are as the feet of harts and*

*Underneath the everlasting arms—*

Thus caught up in thought he stood, breathless, watching the wild bounding creatures as they swept past, overleaping sound, returning to clouds.