ON THE HILLS OF MOUNT IDA

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Among the short trips I took while in Turkey in 2012 was a ride from Ayvalik to Kalkım, a small town on the northern side of Mount Ida. The journey turned out to be more interesting than the destination as the small town did not offer anything special.

Along the way, we stopped often to photograph the environs. Around the region, the lowlands flora is dominated by olive trees and the highlands, pine. This collection of photographs feature mainly pine trees at different locations, along with several plane trees at one place.

The post-processing of the photographs drifted towards monochrome, slightly toned, and crisply detailed echoing the feel of etchings from the past while maintaining full photographic continuous tones where appropriate like the sky. I used this kind of visual contrast in the past in a folio from the same region, Kozak Plateau. The convergence of both collections towards a similar style was not a conscious decision on my part. Perhaps the nature of the subject moved my sensibilities in the same direction. Whatever the reason, I am pleased with the visual, and somewhat geographic kinship between the two collections.
On the way back from Kalkim we stopped at a location known as Hanlar. Its claim to fame was a group of very large plane trees. Although their stately demeanor was somewhat tarnished by a small, chintzy eatery, the cluster of plane trees looked rather monumental amid pine trees. The average girth of the trees was large enough to have a cavity to easily hold 4-5 people inside. And, they were impressively tall and widespread.

The mismatch of the presence of the impressive trees and the small eatery was further enhanced by some strange signs. I understood “Do not litter”, no problem; but found the “Do not dump diapers” sign surprisingly precise and odd.

A man walking around asked what kind of camera I used and I told him I used Canon gear. He extended his arm in a gesture asking me to hand him the camera. Reluctantly, I handed him my camera. He lifted it to his eye, twisted the zoom and the focus rings a few times and returned the camera to me and said that he too was a photographer.

We did not stay too long as there was nothing else to do other than to enjoy the plane trees and the surrounding scenery. After I took all the photographs I wanted, the journey continued.
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