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In Securing Oblivion

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In Securing Oblivion

Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"It was once just an old sand lot sitting in nothing and surrounded by other sand lots. The lot lay content in doing nothing. Large grains of sand shifted; water spilled over rocks and stones and filtered into deep crevices. But nothing moved under its own power, for power was as of now, not. Only passive parts, waiting."

Cover Page Footnote

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IN SECURING OBLIVION

By JOSEPH M. CIUFFINI

I

It was once just an old sand lot sitting in nothing and surrounded by other sand lots. The lot lay content in doing nothing. Large grains of sand shifted; water spilled over rocks and stones and filtered into deep crevices. But nothing moved under its own power, for power was as of now, not. Only passive parts, waiting.

At the end of darkness came light and also time. With them they brought the grass, flowers, bushes and trees; then animals and crawling, writhing creatures, slimy and soft, cuddly and furry, hard shelled and rough. And they were happy.

The walking, grunting and wailing creatures mastered the slow, silent foliage and shrubbery and became the rulers at large, with none above them, except one. And among themselves they fought fiercely and in doing so, killed each other for food and for their happy life. Thus, in the brief period before Them, some remains were left on the old sand lot and the remaining creatures stood together and waited.

Waiting is a tedious time when intelligent beings choose to stay another moment or choose to go on. Each choice involves a risk; a calculated, intelligent risk.

The remainders waited for something. Something they should master as before. Perhaps they grew tired of waiting, but they waited. Passively they waited. Coldness and his

little brother watched them wait. And little brother spoke, "Why do they wait?" "Oh, little one, the extreme of myself, I wish I knew why they waited; but having no intelligence, I cannot know." From sunup to sundown they waited, and while they waited, they watched; coldness and his little brother watched intelligently, also. Watching and waiting. But while waiting, some died, and dying means birth for others. Birth filled death's shoes and the new feet watched, walked and waited.

II

Another creature soon appeared that stood on two, erect. With strange sounds emitted from deep within, the new breed strolled the sand lot amidst the vegetable and animal life. Their eyes saw the remains and they challenged the remainders. A fight for domination ensued and the remainders fought a losing battle till each dark cloud cried aloud for mercy for them and their tears flowed over the remains and washed them clean. Justice tightened his fist, and some of the sound animals were crushed by the palm of death, too. In silent sympathy the sandlot dried with flesh and bones and things with spots of red. But soon, these lingering remains were gone.

And these people mastered the life given to them and waited. Waited. And waited. People waiting. White, black, yellow, and orange people; waiting. Short and tall; thin and fat; waiting. Happy, sad, funny, sorry, worrying, laughing, and fighting people; waiting.

They also tired of waiting and began to create the things of life using the sand lot, the remains of the sand lot, and even some of the remainders of the sand lot. Waiting and making the things to use in the making of life's necessities, the people consumed time. When tired of all the good things, they began to kill, for killing has some human enjoyment attached to its time consuming relation. More remains remained. The sand lot became heavy with the remains that slid into the folds of the previous residuums.

III

More people came and waited in the old sand lot. They waited in bigger shells with up and down boxes, with sheets of white cut by lines, with pointed objects, square things, round things, things. Waiting without knowing why they waited; or, not wishing to know why they waited. However, for them there was nothing else to do except feed their environment-vulnerable framework; lapse into their daily sensorimotor inactivity; frolic with the people-made things; and labor to keep their happy life.

These people waited and while they waited they wished that they didn't have to wait in such a mystery-like manner. Some searched for why they waited and some found out why they waited, for human curiosity must be quenched; human intelligence and resourcefulness provides the liquid. These some searched the remains and realized that the remains showed the constant waiting that was before. They searched and found the Before, and the Before then found no Before to make remains.

A flame shoots out and flickers, igniting the potential, and in a sudden moment the potential materializes to actuality. These some knew, then, that they waited for the first one that did not remain, but was always. These some told the others waiting. Some believed; some refused the knowledge. Human intelligence sometimes refuses to accept a being greater than itself. Intelligence says, "I am the paramount of creation." The lights of reason are shut off by a silent switch and the intelligence gropes and stumbles looking for a new and biased interpretation. Some left and moved to another part of the sand lot and left their remains of life, their happy life.

The some and the some parted unlike one and remained thus for long. Brick is placed upon brick until a wall is built. Then, many bricks and many walls. Finally, there are two sides.

IV

Passion is a fluctuating element of the rational being that acts with, against, and sometimes for the intelligence. Intelligence has chains on passions but if those thin will-type chains snap, — — — — —

The remains looked up and saw the remainders remaining with hearts filled with vice, jealousy, hate, and other intelligent inconsistencies. They watched as hate built more and bigger things with which to fight. Yet, the good people of the sand lot waited for they knew why they waited. But the other somes did not wait. They filled their minds with new and false ideas and marks of definition. But, they too, were filled with hate and fear and all the other some's somenesses. Evil hate spit more and more fighting things from the horrid depths of its mouth while wiggling its tongue to inject the bitter venom of fear.

The struggle finally came, for to some, might makes right. Intelligence has no control in such matters. It was a short struggle; a violent struggle; but, a final struggle by which more remains were left. The remains of much and many remained and the remains of so much time were swallowed up into the sand lot.

All remains, all plants and animals, all people, all people-made things, all everythings, disappeared down into the sand lot and were washed clean by the big cloud that cried. And all that remained was just an old sand lot that was pregnant with remains no longer waiting.

The ancient words of the one above then echoed across the barren sand lot;

“Hush, my little ones,
My favorite sheep.
Wait a little while
Before you sleep.”