

MIND

Of all the creatures that were made he (man) is the most detestable. Of the entire brood he is the only one – the solitary one – that possesses malice. That is the basest of all instincts, passions, vices – the most hateful....He is the only creature that inflicts pain for sport, knowing it to be pain....Also – in all the list he is the only creature that has a nasty mind. Mark Twain

We have found that where science has progressed the farthest, the mind has but regained from nature that which the mind put into nature. Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington

The mind of man may be compared to a musical instrument with a certain range of notes, beyond which in both directions we have an infinitude of silence. John Tyndall

Dr. Clay Voyant wasn't his real name but he felt appropriate for one with his startling unique ability. He often mused that he would have preferred Clare Voyant. He rejected that nom de plume for its chintzy character and obvious female characterization. He did not wish to mislead anyone about his gender. In any case, these names are relevant only because at an early age he discovered that he could read minds.

It appears he was born with this unique trait. It took him awhile before he learnt about his matchless gift, one that nobody ever realized he had. Indeed, as a child he was taken to be backward since he did not talk until he was four or five. He did not need to since he was already reading minds. He finally realized that nobody could read his and that communication required oral conversation.

Despite his ability to anticipate what others were going to do or what they wanted, he was considered an odd and standoffish child. This was a classic example of not wishing to recognize someone with an exclusive and exceptionable ability. Everyone shunned him. His peers and most adults including his teachers were intimidated by his knack of always having the right answer since he read their minds to obtain them. His parents paid him perfunctory attention. One can only assume that they were all somewhat scared by somebody who talked little but seemed to have powers beyond their ken. Luckily they all left him alone. In fact they ostracized him. This did not bother him since it was what he preferred. Actually he was amused by their fears. He was able to understand their origin. This led him to opine that he was a superior being. He never realized that he had an unfair advantage and that more often than not he was simply parroting others who in many instances were smarter than he was.

One of the first things that he learnt about humans was how important money was to them. For him it was not that essential since he could always obtain more than enough for his needs by gambling. Poker was his preferred game of chance. This enabled him to leave home at an early age and to put himself through school and university. He never failed to graduate at the top of his class so that at all times he was the recipient of scholarships, academic awards, research grants, fellowships, and all sorts of other achievement awards.

He had his choice of any profession. It took him awhile to decide. He sought one where he felt he could do the most good. He strongly desired to use his matchless ability for the maximum benefit. In fact Clay Voyant was a decent human being who had a great deal of empathy for his fellow humans. He just about never used his talent to take unfair advantage of anyone. He certainly could have. All he had to do was ascertain the negative secrets that everyone possessed and then use this information to blackmail anyone whose mind he had read. However, he never gave a thought to any nefarious use of his ability. After much deliberation, he decided upon psychiatry.

He did not have the immediate success one would have anticipated. He started by relaxing his patients and then reading their minds. Much to his consternation he discovered that what he was

observing was the most superficial layer of their minds. He could just as well have listened to them verbalize.

He realized that he would have to probe much deeper into their psyches, something he had never even tried. To his delight he found that with a bit of concentration he was able to plumb as deeply as he wished. Using an old aphorism, he was able to peer behind the 'seven veils' of the human conscious and subconscious. While what he unearthed varied greatly from individual to individual, the common disparaging thread was a complex web of base emotions such as greed, envy, need for power to control others, malice, sadism, masochism, predilection to violence and the need for affection and recognition that had been denied, leading in turn to very low self esteem. Underlying all this was perhaps the most destructive of emotions, namely fear, whose origins were also wide-ranging.

More often than not, this new ability enabled him to pinpoint the source of his patients' problems, something he was able to accomplish far faster than any of his confreres. However, this by itself did not provide them with any relief. Luckily, it did not take him long to discover a solution. He literally learnt how to download the totality of his patients' mentalities into his mind, which he then used to delete their most negative characteristics, being very careful not to discard other positive attributes that made each of them unique. He then uploaded the result back into their beings.

His cure success rate was phenomenal. All sorts of mental disorders including retardation, mongolism, neurosis and psychosis, bipolar behavior, epilepsy and paranoia, were cured. He upset the medical community by overturning an old belief. He convincingly demonstrated that by altering a person's psyche in a positive manner many physical disorders could disappear. The reverse had been commonly accepted. In any case and once again his work demolished the old notion of the 'separation of mind and body'.

His success with downloading led him to probe his mind's capabilities. He was absolutely amazed to discover that he did not have to be in the presence of patients to be able to read and transfer their minds into his. It did not matter where they were or for that matter who they were. Thus, he could know instantly what leading government officials of any country were actually thinking, including those that were considered enemies. He agonized whether he should provide the military, political, industrial, information he could obtain to the intelligence officials of his country. Despite being a patriotic citizen, he finally decided against it on the grounds that he was not well enough versed in international affairs to be able to judge what, if anything, he should provide. Furthermore, he was too involved in investigating his mental potential to be overly concerned with the mundane affairs of the world.

He continued delving into his own mind and was bowled over by learning of his ability to read the minds of past prominent personages long gone from this existence. He hypothesized that somehow or other and beyond his understanding, energy vestiges of their minds remained around, waiting to be tapped. Not only could he delve into their minds, he was also able to modify their minds as with the minds of his patients.

The enormity of these aptitudes did not escape him. First of all it was rather astounding to learn that he could transcend the limitations of space and time. Secondly and even more awesome was that if he altered the minds of famous historical figures history itself would be changed. For him history no longer remained a fixed set of facts. These could easily be changed at his whim. There is no doubt that if he chose to exercise his abilities he could become the most powerful person that ever existed, indeed, he could take on the character of a deity.

Would it not be nice if this fable ended at this point with our protagonist creating a new world by repairing the old one? If that were the case there would be no need for this fanciful tale. Unfortunately Clay Voyant was not as clairvoyant as he would have liked nor as knowledgeable about science as he should have been. He never realized that each time he downloaded someone else's mind and then reintroduced it into that person, a trace of what he presumably

had erased remained with him. Over time he accumulated an overload of negative thoughts. On top of all that was something that had never occurred to him. Despite knowing that he had overcome the confines of space and time, especially the former, he had simply assumed that all thoughts he could read or was receiving were terrestrial. The truth was that he was also being bombarded with mental thoughts from outer space. He could not comprehend them nor ascertain what impact on him they were having. He simply attributed them to 'noise'. It is quite possible that aliens had selected and provided him with his ability to read minds as a first means of intergalactic communication.

For a time he still managed to function reasonably well despite being saddled with multiple personalities and unexplainable feelings. He tried to suppress them. Alas, he failed. There was just too much conflicting information. He became more and more confused as his mind began to deteriorate. Inevitably, he made a horrendous mistake. He accidentally downloaded his mind and everything his mind had accumulated, including all the excess garbage, into the mind of one of his patients. Tragically, there was no way he could retrieve his mind since he was now mindless. He and his patient are now inmates for the insane and the mentally deficient. What a pity. If there is a moral to this tragic tale, it is, "Be mindful of your mind and do not get too close to anyone else's." Do you mind?

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