

TOYS

Females never have a childhood. They play with dolls as if the dolls were infants thus emulating their mothers. Males never really become adults. They are nearly always obsessed with their toys. An authoress whose name I cannot recall.

I count religion but a childish toy, and hold there is no sin but ignorance. Christopher Marlowe

The woods of Arcady are dead, And over is their antique joy; of old the world on dreaming fed; Gray Truth is now her painted toy. William Butler Yeats

I am an indulgent parent. That is an understatement. There is nearly nothing I can deny my sole offspring, who is spoiled rotten. This is the way I was brought up. We reproduce by means that are difficult to explain. We do not clone ourselves. We remove a portion of our anatomy, subject it to a unique form of energy and 'lo and behold' a newborn arrives. Obviously this creature has many traits the parent has provided, yet it still has a mind of its own that it utilizes for its so called benefit and pleasure. My child and I are frequently not in accord with each other yet , steadfastly, I provide support for its whims, often in the form of what can be called 'toys'. These are really not gifts. They are part and parcel of my offspring's natural endowment. All I do is relate that they are available and how to reach them.

Two examples are the ability to cover any distance instantaneously and to be able to time travel. This is possible because in our world the dimensions of distance and time do not necessarily occur. Since speed or velocity is the rate at which one can cover a certain distance in a given time period and since these two parameters do not necessarily exist, under these circumstances, neither does speed nor velocity. However, we do have the capacity to make time and distance a sort of reality if we so desire. We also are able to create illusions out of nothing and anything else from available matter. Like many like me, I became bored with our static world in which nothing really changed. We spend our time fruitlessly searching for meaning. At some point we nearly all decide that enough is enough and simply cease to exist.

However my offspring took to these new toys like a duck to water. For quite awhile it seemed quite elated with its new abilities. I now hardly ever heard from him until I received an unexpected surprise visit. He appeared to be quite upset.

"With my new powers which, I guess, can be viewed as toys, initially I had a wonderful time. They allowed me to do anything I wished or so I thought. In particular it was my creative authority that provided me with the most pleasure. I fashioned all sorts of things with which I could play many games. These competitive games allowed me to exercise both my body and mind. Of course, I always won. That was the problem. First there was no challenge and second the outcome was never in doubt. It did not take too long before I got bored with my new abilities. I had to find something more risky, defiant and demanding. I spent a good deal of time seeking

such a situation. Ultimately, I thought I found it. Much to my horror, it has become something I never foresaw.

I decided to create a new world. This world had to exist as part of a universe which I previously fabricated. This was an elaborate achievement. It started with a huge explosion which in turn gave rise to a series of events that led to the creation of the world I had thought of. Initially, it was nothing more than a conglomeration of fiery matter. Then, I proceeded to cool it down and to make its environment somewhat more congenial. This allowed for the formation of minute forms of life which under my handiwork evolved into more sophisticated life forms, the last of which I purposely shaped in my image. These reproduced by sexual acts that necessitated the creation of two so-called sexes. Amongst the lower life forms, to make sure that there was a demographic balance, a certain degree of violence was programmed allowing the stronger to consume the weaker.

However when it came to the most advanced beings this aggression turned into brutality, cruelty, sadism, and carnage that I had never envisioned. The excuses used were based on greed, fear, power, rapacity and just plain sociopathic behaviour. I tried anything I could think of to un-programme them. I imbued a number of them, over time, with outstanding abilities in the Arts, Music, Literature, Philosophy, Politics, Science, and Theatre with the hope that these would promote needed change. Nothing worked. I even shaped myself as one of them hoping that by appearing before them I could induce them to behave in a more civilized way. By doing this I inadvertently created a new sect whose members preached my message, but to no avail. For my efforts I was summarily executed. I am at a loss. I just do not know what to do. Can you help me?"

Before answering I gazed at my offspring with a certain amount of bemusement.

"Actually I was quite aware of your dilemma. I have been following your games and toys with great interest. There is very little I can suggest that will resolve your dilemma. All you can do is let the game play out. One of two things will occur. Either there will be a self correction which will ameliorate the situation or these toys will simply self destruct and everything else along with them. After all they are simply toys."

Actually, something else bothered me to a great extent. My offspring created these advanced beings in its image. Did they get these barbaric traits from it? Did my offspring get them from me? Did I get them from my ancestors? Is my kind seriously flawed? Are our toys really a reflection of ourselves? I wonder!

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