

WHY

It is not every question that deserves an answer. Publilius Syrus

Ignorance never settles a question. Disraeli

There is no absolute answer to any question and yet curiosity is the only valid reason for indulging in that pursuit. Jack Basuk

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all: And thus the native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, And enterprises of great pith and moment, With this regard their currents turn awry, And lose the name of action. Shakespeare. { It is this statement from Hamlet that inspired the following story. }

Juc awoke completely bewildered in an absolute daze. He had no idea as to where he was. He had no memory about himself. What he was, and where he came from were also mysteries. Yet he did not seem to be overly bothered by this bizarre situation.

He had not lost his powers of observation and discernment. What he found was a place which was horrific. He was in the slum area of an urban complex characterized by filth, cardboard living dwellings, by children and women physically and mentally abused and worst of all, forms of violence that led one to believe that any form of civility had long been abandoned. As he walked through this panoply of terror and dread, he became quite disheartened and was beginning to lose any hope for its inhabitants.

Then, out of the blue, he happened on a scene that lightened his spirits. A bunch of children were playing together, supervised by a kindly and loving old lady who had succeeded in installing in the children a sense of fair play without any semblance of violence governing their activity. Because of her, love seemed to be the order of the day. For Juc, this became an epiphany which influenced his behaviour in unforeseen ways.

Juc never realized that he was imbued with charisma, a magnetic personality that has a powerful effect on those contacted. He started by approaching two men who were engaged in a fight with knives, that would lead to either serious injuries or death. No police were present to prevent this probable calamity. For reasons impossible to comprehend, the fight ceased, the knives were dropped and the two then hugged each other. They became devoted to Juc and never left him. They became his disciples and successfully spread his gospel about love and non-violence. They made him famous so that he always drew large crowds in peaceful demonstrations. He insisted that he would not tolerate unruliness. His orations became very popular.

However, he was unpopular with the power structure that had him arrested on numerous occasions on the grounds that he was causing harmful disruptions. They were never able to make these charges stick. He was released on each such event. This turned him into a celebrated martyr, especially after he disappeared. Everybody believed that he had been assassinated, giving more credence to his supposed self-sacrifice. Legends and myths about him became part of his accomplishments and biography. Actually he had been returned to his home world.

Lat and Fiz, two elderly members of the Supreme Council of the planet Jarez were having their usual spirited conversation. This time, it was Juc's behaviour that was at the core of their frustration with him. The populace of this planet valued intellectual pursuits more than anything else. There were two such endeavors. First was analytical reasoning and the second was creativity. There were very few that were

imbued with creative ability, or with both. Although, the vast majority could reason analytically, those who excelled were scarce. Lat and Fiz were amongst this group. Juc was neither creative nor capable of reasoning analytically. He was unique, in that he just did things without any grasp of why.

They realized, somewhat reluctantly, that they were nowhere near as beneficial as Juc. Lat and Fiz never understood why he was so successful at his accomplishments. Upon returning to his Home world he always remembered where he had been and what he had done. His brilliant solution to the slum area discrepancies was such an example. However, this was surpassed by exploits in another town in a different world. They labelled this municipality 'The Grey Town'. It was a place with no contrasts. The food provided was always alike and without any discernible taste. Their living quarters were always the same shade of grey as were their clothes. Their windows looked out on streets, tenanted by dull and drab buildings. They hardly ever conversed with each other. All this despite the complete freedom to do as they wished.

Into this situation arrived Juc. He found it deplorable. He slapped one of the residents hoping for a reply which did not come. He then found where the electrical power originated and quickly dismantled it resulting in the disappearance of all sorts of services including such things as garbage disposal, hot water, air purification, etc. The authorities were at a loss. As a result, it did not take long for the Grey Town to disappear.

EPILOG

Unknown to everyone, including Juc, Lat and Fiz, all the preceding were experiments carried out by behavioral psychologists from another world who were copiously studying the inhabitants of Jarez. For them Juc was a matchless individual that merited a close examination. They managed to send him off to real worlds that behaved in many different ways including some that were deplorable. However the Grey Town was a complete fabrication. There was no such place and no such personages. They were struck by how he dismantled the town and could not fathom 'why and how' he chose his methodology. After all, everything about the town was fictitious. Do most living entities behave instinctively out of fear or by some sort of reason? They were concerned because they did not know whether they would behave similarly under the same circumstances. If they did, WHY?. Self-examination became the order of the day. It led nowhere.

Jack Basuk

Oct. 26, 2014