

SUPERMAN

The superior man is the providence of the inferior. He is eyes for the blind, strength for the weak, and a shield for the defenseless. He stands erect by bending above the fallen. He rises by lifting others.

Robert Green Ingersoll

A glorious place, a glorious age, I tell you! A very Neon Renaissance – And the myths that actually touched you at that time – not Hercules, Orpheus, Ulysses and Aeneas – but Superman, Captain Marvel, Batman. Tom Wolfe

-I want to teach men the sense of their existence, which is the Superman, the lightning out of the dark cloud man.

-Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman – a rope over an abyss.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche.

-When the wooden idol does not answer the peasant's prayer, he beats it; when the flesh and blood idol does not satisfy the civilized man, he cuts its head off.

-The Duke inquires contemptuously whether his game keeper is the equal of the Astronomer Royal; but he insists that they shall both be hanged if they murder him.

-The relation of superior to inferior excludes good manners.

-Criminals do not die by the hands of the law. They die by the hands of other men.

-When a man wants to murder a tiger he calls it sport; when the tiger wants to murder him he calls it ferocity. The distinction between Crime and Justice is no greater.

-Titles distinguish the mediocre, embarrass the superior, and are disgraced by inferiors.

-Beware of the man whose god is in the skies.

-In heaven an angel is nobody in particular.

-We admit that when the divinity we worshipped made itself visible and comprehensible we crucified it.

-In a stupid nation the man of genius becomes a god: Everybody worships him and nobody does his will.

-Except during the nine months before he draws his first breath no man manages his affairs as well as a tree does. George Bernard Shaw

By vocation I am a space explorer, one amongst an exalted few. Like them, I have spent a great portion of my life in outer space and have many fascinating accounts of my adventures. In our universe, indeed even in our galaxy, the near infinite variability of all aspects of existence that include radical environmental and biological differences makes our universe a wondrous and unpredictable scene. It is no surprise that what we came across we found to be amazing.

My favorite example is the obliteration of the old and widely accepted notion that the basic elements of life are carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and other trace elements thrown in for good measure, with water extant. This is probably true in environments resembling ours. Who's to say that life could not have originated under completely different conditions, giving rise to unimaginable biological entities with very different means of communication, very unusual social systems and by our standards, outlandish technologies. I could spend many hours recounting all the mesmerizing incidents and persona I encountered. However, I have decided to give an account of one group that I met by chance. They represent such a disturbing factor that they will be of profound exasperation to most. Yet, for the sake of verity, I feel obliged to narrate what transpired.

My meeting with the group in question was completely inadvertent and fortuitous. In space, something often goes wrong. When I became a space explorer I learned all about the risks involved but remained quite ready to take them. I found myself in a segment of space that I had never visited, when a malfunction occurred, requiring that I land the craft immediately. I carefully examined all my charts but

could not find a planet that would allow me to land safely. At that moment I felt that my luck had run out and that I was about to meet my maker, whereupon I blacked out. I awoke in a room that was surprisingly mundane and spare. While soothing and calm, this was totally unexpected. It was very different from the exotic and bizarre surroundings that had welcomed me in other alien domains.

After I had a chance to familiarize my self with this chamber, which took about one minute, an unseen door opened and my alien host entered. I knew him for an extraterrestrial, yet his appearance was decidedly human. Speaking flawless English, he introduced himself.

“My name is Goth and I will be willing to answer any questions. However let me anticipate some of them by providing you with a brief introduction. First of all, I am sure you wish to know exactly where you are. Well, I cannot really inform you of the exact locale of this place. Suffice to say that it is nowhere and everywhere. It does not appear in any space chart and we wish to keep it that way. We have remedied your space ship and vastly improved your health. You will be free to leave and return to ‘Earth’ shortly.

Secondly, I am not as you perceive me. I have the ability to convert myself into an image that is familiar to you or into any other as required. I also am completely cognizant of all the languages of your planet, since we have been monitoring your history for a very long time. Thus I am able to communicate with you. I am the only member of our populace that you will meet.

Thirdly, we have mental and physical powers that are unimaginable to you. While they are not infinite, they are countless orders of magnitude higher than yours. Because of our abilities we have no need of technology. We have all the capabilities that any technology can proffer. For example, we can instantaneously visit any place in the universe by using a force similar to gravity which is ‘action at a distance’. Einstein’s maxim that the speed of electromagnetic energy is the limiting speed is only partially true. Communication between us, using both language and image, is also direct and immediate. Our health is close to perfection. In all our recorded history no one has expired. This may be because we have the intrinsic means to remedy anything that might cause us physical and or psychological disorders. We do not claim to be everlasting, yet we have no idea how long we will exist. While we have garnered much knowledge, we have not been able to determine how or why we evolved into our present state, nor anything about the origins of ‘existence’.

We are very aware of our ignorance about many things and do not claim to be infallible. As you will shortly learn, we have miscalculated on a number of occasions. What may be problematic to you is that we are all truly equal. Even though your ideology often expresses the notion that all are born equal, such equality is nothing more than a fairy tale. What you should be striving for is, ‘that all should be born with equal opportunity’. We have no hierarchy of power. Politics as you know it does not exist for us. We live in total harmony. Because we are all equal in terms of our mental and physical make ups, there is no way that we can compete with one another. Further, we feel that we have no need for such wasteful activity. Competition had and in some instances has its place, but it is not for us.

Up to about ten thousand years ago, as measured by your time scale, we devoted all our time to seeking knowledge, truth and wisdom. Then we felt that we had reached a dead end, regurgitating our findings interminably. We decided that we needed a new approach to our existence. We knew that we were the most powerful and authoritative species in the universe as we understood that entity. It seemed that we could put our abilities to good use by serving the less powerful and more ignorant. In other words, we decided to devote ourselves to the service of all others less fortunate than us. We had spent millennia observing myriads of inferior life forms throughout the universe. We thought we could be of assistance with many of their problems. Examples are economic, political, social, environmental, and biological difficulties; others that arise from calamitous events such as volcanic eruptions, hurricane force winds, earthquakes, tidal waves and even on rare occasions, suns going nova or planets being hit by destructive meteorites frequently require immediate and extraordinary attention. The numbers having need of our help turned out to be enormous. We weren’t populous enough to help all at the

same time. By cloning ourselves we were able to visit those who were in the direst need of our aid. This required us to set up a system of triage. It was not foolproof. I am sure that many species were lost despite our best efforts.

Our successes were plentiful. However, the species of one planet turned out to be so obdurate and stubborn that to this day we have had only a very limited success with them. This has been largely overshadowed by their destructive behavior mainly fueled by greed as well as superstition based on false myths, legends, an inordinate love of power, money and inane symbols that frequently assumed more importance than what they were supposed to signify. I think you can guess which peoples I am referring to. Without further elaboration, our agents either were turned into a variety of 'Gods', often in conflict with each other, or were persecuted and crucified. We endowed one small group with a system of morality and ethics which we hoped they would be able to successfully promote. Much to our regret, they have been hounded and vilified ever since and have paid an awful price by being massacred. This was our gravest error. We are not Gods. We are mystified by the contradictory deeds of the human race. On the one hand, you have been most creative in the Arts and Sciences and on numerous occasions have extended real help to those in need. On the other hand, you have behaved in a most bestial manner not only towards your fellows but to your eco-systems and to other life forms. Truly you are diseased. With all our mental powers we do not know how to cope with you. We can only hope that your disease is not contagious so that it will not spread to other planets in other parts of the universe. If such a possibility becomes a probability then we will have no other option but to destroy you or to quarantine you. That is the message you should bring back to your kind. Do you have any questions?"

While Goth waited patiently I reflected on all that he had conveyed to me. That his revelations were shocking and appalling has to be the understatement of all time. Finally I asked him the following question.

"You seem to be obsessed with my species, with human kind. Why is that?"

Goth looked at me curiously and replied.

"That is a very good question. I obviously underestimated your acuity. DNA analysis indicates that there is a distinct possibility that we have a common biological ancestor. As yet, we have no way of knowing whether you and yours will evolve into beings with the mental and physical prowess that we possess. We are dismayed by such a prospect, not because we fear that you will invade our territory; there is no shortage of such; but that you may not have lost your very destructive and downright evil practices by then. We shudder to think what you would do if you had our power. Do you have any other questions?"

"No," I replied somewhat tenuously.

The next thing I knew I was back in my space ship on my way home. Even to this day, I am not able to determine whether the preceding was a dream or a real warning and threat?

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