



### ONE PILGRAM'S PROGRESS

ONE MAN STARTED OFF STUDYING THINGS --  
THEN MOVED TO REFLECTING ON THEM --  
THEN ON TO PONDERING THEM,  
AND FINALLY ON TO REALIZING THAT, "REALIZING WHAT WAS GOING ON WITH THEM"  
WAS THE SOLE, USEFUL METHOD.

-- SO -- SEE!, DON'T GIVE UP HOPE JUST YET.

ONE MAN HAD TWO SETS OF UNDERWEAR --  
ONE ANNOYED HIM AND THE OTHER DIDN'T.

THEN ONE DAY SOME ONE ASKED HIM WHY HE WORE THE FIRST SET IF IT BOTHERED HIM --  
-- AND HE DIDN'T HAVE AN ANSWER.  
-- BUT HE STILL HAD: TWO SETS OF UNDERWEAR!

ONE DAY A MAN ASKED HIS REFLECTION IN A MIRROR WHY IT LOOKED SO DISTURBED,  
AND IT SAID THAT IT DID BECAUSE THE MAN DID -- AND THE MAN DENIED IT! --  
-- AND THE MIRROR DENIED IT! --  
AND THE MAN SAID, "YOU CAN'T DENY IT - YOU JUST SAID IT WAS SO!",  
AND THE MIRROR ANSWERED HIM BACK WITH THE SAME WORDS.  
THEN THE MAN LOOKED PUZZLED.  
AND THE MAN LOOKED IN A MIRROR AT HIS REFLECTION,  
AND ASKED IT WHY IT LOOKED SO PUZZLED.

THE POLICE CAN'T HELP YOU IN CAPTURING A PERPETRATOR WHO  
LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU AND THEM, -- AND IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD TO TRY  
AND LAY BLAME, (SUCH AS: THEY'RE NOT ON THE JOB - OR THAT YOUR DESCRIPTION OF  
THE PERP WAS LACKING. IT'S JUST A FACT: THEY CAN'T HELP- YOU ALL LOOK TOO MUCH ALIKE.

AND BOY ASKED HIS FATHER,

"IS IT MAYBE SIMPLY THAT IF YOU'VE GOT TWO OF ANYTHING -- YOU'VE GOT TROUBLES?  
AND THE OLD MAN PULLED AN INVISIBLE TRIGGER ON THE IMAGINARY GUN  
HE HAD POINTED DIRECTLY AT THE LAD.

AND AS HIS DREAM WORLD PROGRESS CONTINUED TO COMFORT HIM,  
ONE MAN BESTOWED A NAME OF HIS INNER WOMAN,  
(WHICH HE BEGAN TO RECOGNIZE AS ALSO BEING HIS INNER CHAIN SAW),  
HE CALLED HER: THE BEAUTIFUL MOLLY RAT-GAGGER -- AND FELT TWICE AS GOOD.

THE STORY OF THE GREAT SEARCH FOR ME

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A MAN RAN INTO A BURGLER IN HIS HOUSE AND SAID, "I'M LOOKING FOR A BURGLER.",  
"I'LL HELP YOU LOOK.", SAID THE BURGLER.

...YES INDEED DEE! -- THE GREAT ETERNAL SEARCH FOR ME.

\* \* \*

IN ONE UNIVERSE THERE WAS A RADIO TRANSMITTER -- THE SIZE OF THE UNIVERSE --  
THAT BROADCAST CONSTANTLY  
WITH EVERY SINGLE MOLECULE THEREIN  
PICKING UP BITS AND PIECES THEREOF.

....(OH, AND BY THE WAY, [JUST IN CASE YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED],  
THE VERBAL INHABITANTS HAD A COMPLETE OTHER DESCRIPTION OF WHAT WAS GOING ON  
IN THIS REGARD.)

...OH YEAH, YOU MIGHT ALSO CARE TO TAKE NOTE OF THIS COROLLARY:  
NO ONE WHO WILL DESCRIBE A PARTICULAR HAPPENING OR PHENOMENA UNDERSTANDS IT -  
-- ANY ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS WHAT'S GOING ON NEVER MENTIONS IT.

REGARDING WHAT WOULD BE THE ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCES IF MEN WERE ABLE TO SUCCEED  
IN CERTAIN OF THEIR IMAGINED DESIRES TO "IMPROVE THEMSELVES"

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A MAN WHO WORKED AS A RETAIL CLERK IN A STORE SAID TO HIMSELF,  
"I SURE WISH I COULD GET INTO MANAGEMENT  
SO THAT I WOULDN'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH THESE IDIOT CUSTOMERS."  
.....THEN UPON FURTHER REFLECTION WAS SUDDENLY STRUCK,  
"BUT I'D STILL NOT ONLY HAVE TO DEAL WITH CUSTOMERS,  
BUT THEN ALSO EMPLOYEES -- THE LIKES OF ME!"

- - -

WHO BUT IRREDEEMABLE DREAMERS WILL PERSIST IN DREAMING THAT THEY CAN SOME HOW  
BECOME MORE THAN THEY ALREADY ARE, AND THUS SOME HOW BECOME  
OTHER THAN WHAT THEY BY NATURE ARE.

\* \* \*

FOR THE FIRST PART OF HIS LIFE, ONE MAN WOULD SAY WHATEVER CAME TO HIS MIND,  
THEN EVENTUALLY CAME TO SEE HIS MIND AS NOT BEING TOTALLY HIS OWN,  
AND THUS WHATEVER HE SAID, SOMETHING LESS THAN REPRESENTATIVE OF HIM.

-- SO THERE COULD YET BE HOPE FOR YOU.

AFTER SOME UNUSUAL EXPERIENCES, ONE MAN NOW SAYS,  
"THE 'ME' THAT'S ALWAYS JUMPING AROUND THAT CALLS ITSELF, 'ME'  
I'M BEGINNING TO BE SERIOUSLY SUSPICIOUS OF."



ONE GUY WOULDN'T GIVE ADVICE UNLESS ASKED --  
...(AND EVEN THEN HE DIDN'T GIVE REAL ADVICE.)

...OKAY, COROLLARY TIME AGAIN:  
ANYONE WHO UNDERSTANDS ENOUGH SO THAT THEIR ADVICE WOULD ACTUALLY BE VALUE  
ALSO UNDERSTANDS THAT GIVING VOICE TO IT IS AN ACT OF NO PRACTICALITY.

IT IS ERROR TO CONDEMN OTHER PEOPLE'S PHYSICAL EXERCIZE OF AN IDEA THAT  
YOU SEE AS INTENDED FOR INTERNAL USE,  
AND ERROR ALSO FOR YOU TO TAKE YOUR INTERNAL EXERCIZE OF IT AS MEANINGFUL.

...("YOU THINK THAT ABOUT COVERS IT, SON?",

"PAW, YOU WIPED THE PLATE COMPLETELY CLEAN ON THAT ONE!")

- - -

IT'S ONE LEVEL OF FOLLY TO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
TRUTH AND ERROR, WISDOM AND IGNORANCE,  
BUT A HIGHER, INCOMPRABLE ONE TO THINK THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
ANY OF THE THINGS WITHWHICH THE MIND CONCERNS ITSELF.

....("PAW, THAT DAMN PLATE'S SO CLEAN NOW YOU COULD EAT OFF IT!")

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...  
  
LEGEND TELLS OF A LONG AGO, FAR AWAY WORLD  
ONWHICH THE THINKING CREATURES BELIEVED, (ARE YOU READY FOR THIS?!),  
THAT THOUGHTS ACTUALLY MEANT SOMETHING (!?!?!)  
...(CAN YOU BELIEVE HOW FAR WE'VE COME IN THIS UNIVERSE!?)

- - -

LOOKING UP ADMIRINGLY AT HIS FATHER, A BOY TUGGED AT HIS HAND AND ASKED,  
"IS IT HARD BEING SO SMART WHILE LIVING AMONG SUCH IDIOTS?!",  
AND THE OLD MAN REPLIED, "WHY ASK ME?!"

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FOR MANY YEARS, ONE MAN SPENT THE MONEY HE FOUND IN HIS POCKET,  
THEN FINALLY THOUGHT, "THIS IS NOT MY MONEY."

-- SO MAYBE THERE'S STILL HOPE FOR YOU.

IN A CERTAIN JUNGLE -- UP A CERTAIN TREE  
LIVED A SHADOW OF A CREATURE WHO DID NOT EXIST THERE.

TRAVEL CAN BE BROADENING --  
TRAVEL CAN BE RESTRICTIVE --  
BEST BET IS TO -- KILL THAT SHADOW.

AFTER MUCH STUDY, NOTE TAKING AND ANALYZATION, ONE MAN CONCLUDED,  
"WHAT IS THIS 'ME' IN ME  
OTHER THAN THE THOUGHTS THAT  
UNCONTROLLABLY PASS THROUGH ME?!"

IN A CERTAIN GALAXY  
WHEN ONE PLANET DEFEATS ANOTHER ONE  
THE INHABITANTS ON THE LOSING ONE MUST BEGAN BELIEVING THAT THEY ARE "SOMEBODY"

REMEMBER, LADIES AND OTHERS,  
THERE IS NO SUCH DISH AS, UN-JUST DESERTS" --  
NO SIR -- NOT IN A LAND, SANS ALL SWEETS.

...AND AS WE MIGHT HAVE FEARED, SOMEONE RAISES THIS OBJECTION,  
"BUT THERE MUST BE SUGAR HERE! -- AFTER ALL, I CAN SPELL THE WORD, SUGAR!",  
AND AS WE ALL KNOWN BY NOW -- "IF YOU CAN SAY IT -- YOU CAN BELIEVE IT!"  
...(GUESS I KINDA STEP INTO THAT ONE!  
....[WHICH OF COURSE YOU ALWAYS DO --  
...(IF YOU TALK TO CREATURES WITH THE ABILITY OF SPEECH)]).

SOME TIMES WHEN HE'D CRACK AN EYE -- DURING A SNOOZE -- A MAN WOULD THINK,  
"THERE IS NOTHING TO 'AWAKE' TO -- ONLY SOMETHING TO AWAKEN FROM."



MYTH TELLS OF A PLANET ONWHICH THE PREEMINANT CREATURES EACH BELIEVED  
THAT THEY HAD SWALLOWED ANOTHER PERSON IN THEIR EARLY DAYS,  
AND THEN SPENT A LARGE PART OF THEIR LIVES CLAIMING THAT  
THEY WANTED TO BE RID OF THIS ALIEN CREATURE INSIDE THEM - OR EVEN THAT  
THEY WERE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN ATTEMPTING SAME.

....(SEEMS GOOD THAT THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE,  
LIFE PROVIDES ITS CREATURES WITH LITTLE HOBBIES TO PASS THE TIME.)

ONE MAN THOUGHT,

"PERHAPS THE GREATEST MISTAKE MEN MAKE IS IN MISTAKING ONE THING FOR ANOTHER...  
....WAIT!, WHAT'D I MEAN, 'PERHAPS'?! -- LET'S GET THIS CORRECT:  
THE GREATEST MISTAKE MEN MAKE IS IN THINKING THAT  
THERE ARE DUAL VERSIONS OF EVERYTHING SO THAT A MISTAKING OF THE TWO IS POSSIBLE!  
NOW THERE'S YOUR, 'GREATEST MISTAKE'!. "

ONE MAN SAYS,

"I'VE FIGURED OUT WHY I CONTINUE TO LISTEN TO TALK RADIO, (WHICH I HATE) --  
-- IT'S BECAUSE IT REMINDS ME OF MY OWN MIND."

AFTER SOMEONE WHO BELIEVED THEY'D BEEN MISTREATED BY HIM, SAID TO HIM,  
"THIS'LL COME BACK TO HAUNT YOU.", A MAN THOUGHT,  
"HELL - EVERY THING COMES BACK TO HAUNT ME!  
....ESPECIALLY THAT THING I CALL, 'ME'!"

ONE MAN NICK NAMED HIS THOUGHTS, "STRICTLY ENFORCED"  
JUST AS A SICK JOKE ON HIMSELF.....OR SOMEBODY (?!?)

THIS THING IS THE ONLY THING IN THE UNIVERSE THAT,  
EVEN THOUGH IT EXISTS, NO ONE CAN TELL YOU WHAT IT IS --  
....INCLUDING THOSE WHO'VE SEEN IT.

...("BUT, DAMN!", THOUGHT SAM,  
"JUST THAT MUCH INFORMATION SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR ME TO  
GUESS WHAT IT IS.")

"AND SO, BOYS AND GIRLS,  
IT TURNS OUT THAT JUST ABOUT THE ONLY THING REALLY WORTH DISCOVERIN'  
IN THIS WHOLE, WIDE WORLD TURNS OUT TO BE SOMETHING THAT CAN'T....WELL....  
.....YOU GET THE PICTURE."

THE MAJOR OBSTACLE IN UNDERSTANDING THE MIND IS THOUGHT,  
AND THE MAJOR OBSTACLE IN UNDERSTANDING THOUGHT IS ALSO THOUGHT.

....WHA'D'CHA EXPECT?!

A BOY WHOSE FATHER, WHO HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF THE  
HAD HELD ALMOST DAILY TALKS WITH HIM IN WHICH THE ELDER WOULD OFFER  
EXTENSIVE COMMENTARIES ON THE NATURE OF MAN, HIS COLLECTIVE EXISTANCE,  
AND THE PHENOMENON OF LIFE ITSELF,  
ONE DAY ASKED THE OLD MAN,  
"CAN YOU DISTILL FOR ME IN A FEW WORDS PRECISELY WHAT IT IS THAT YOU HAVE  
FOR SO LONG BEEN TRYING TO CONVEY TO ME ABOUT THE MANY THINGS IN LIFE  
YOU HAVE SPOKEN OF?",

"YES.", HIS FATHER REPLIED, "THEY'RE ALL BULLSHIT.",  
"THEN WHY", ASKED THE BOY, "DID YOU SPEND SO MUCH TIME TALKING ABOUT THEM?",  
"BECAUSE THAT'S ALL ANY OF THEM ARE -- JUST TALK."

....AND EVENTUALLY THE YOUNG MAN APPRECIATED THE APPROACH  
HIS FATHER HAD UTILIZED IN THIS PARTICULAR ASPECT OF HIS UPBRINGING.



...

THERE WAS ONCE A KING WHO WENT HUNTING,  
AND THE HUNTING MASTER WOULD ONLY HAND HIS GRACE INVISIBLE ARROWS  
WHEN ON THE TRAIL OF INVISIBLE PREY.

WHEN HE WOULD TAKE PARTICULAR NOTICE OF A CERTAIN ACTIVITY WITHIN HIM,  
ONE MAN WOULD OFTEN SAY, "AHH, THE SEWER BACKS UP ON ME AGAIN I SEE."

ONE MAN THOUGHT,

"IF I JUST WOULDN'T TALK TO FOOLS I MIGHT BE ALL RIGHT."

....(AND HE KNEW JUST WHICH FOOL HE HAD IN MIND.)

O.H.T.D.: OKAY, HERE'S THE DANGER

EVERY TIME YOU SAY, "I" YOU BELIEVE THAT THE THOUGHT SAYING, "I" IS YOU.  
-- THAT'S THE DANGER.

\* \* \*

...

WORDS ARE LIKE A SUIT ON A DEAD MAN.

ONE MAN SWALLOWED AN OCEAN --  
ANOTHER MAN ABSORBED A DESERT.

SEE! -- DON'T GIVE UP YET.

THE WHEEL OF DESTINY....FOR THE UNFORTUNATE

IN HIS "ME" CAGE

ONE MAN HAD THOUGHTS WHICH WOULD RUN ROUND AND ROUND ALL DAY LONG  
INSIDE A HAMPSTER.

ON A CERTAIN PLANET WAS AN ILLNES --  
OVERWHICH YOU COULD NOT GET AS LONG AS YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE TRYING TO.



ALTHOUGH IT SEEMED OBVIOUS TO HIM NOW, ONE MAN WOULD STILL PERIODICALLY REMIND HIMSELF THAT:

"THE OPPOSITE OF ANYTHING IS JUST AS INCORRECT AS THE THING ITSELF."

ONE MAN'S BATTLE CRY:

"I HAVE PHELM IN MY THROAT & THOUGHTS IN MY MIND --  
-- WHAT CAN STOP ME NOW?! --  
..(OTHER THAN -- PHELM AND THOUGHTS.)"

AND LIFE ASKED ONE MAN, "DO YOU THINK YOU'VE BEEN SHORT CHANGED?",  
"ONLY IF I'VE BEEN CHANGED.", HE REPLIED,  
AND FOR ONCE, (IN THESE CONVERSATIONS), LIFE DIDN'T GET IT.  
....(KINDA MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER, DON'T IT?!)

AND NOW: STRAIGHT FROM TALLEDAGA -- INTO YOUR SPLEEN!

IF THINKING IS A RACE  
THEN TALKING IS HEMLOCK AT THE STRATING LINE.

ONCE ONE MAN REALIZED THAT THE VOICE HE KEPT HEARING, URGING HIM TO,  
"LOOK INTO MY EYES.", WAS COMING FROM HIS EYES  
HE KNEW IT WAS TIME TO GO BACK TO THE DARKROOM  
AND DO SOME MORE WORK ON THE PHOTOGRAPH OF HIS 'ME'.

IN ONE LIFE, ONE MAN WAS A MOSQUITO -- IN THE NEXT, A BOULDER --  
SO PERHAPS THERE IS HOPE FOR YOU.

THOUGHT: A MAN PURSUING HIS OWN ECHO.

WHEN ONE MAN HEARD IT SAID THAT, "NOTHING LASTS FOREVER.", HE THOUGHT. "HUH! -  
- NOTHING LASTS FOR ANY TIME!"

ONE MAN ASKED LIFE,

"WHY DO I CALL THE MIND IN ME, 'MY MIND?!, WHEN IT'S OBVIOUSLY NOT SO?!",

AND LIFE REPLIED, "WHY ASK ME?!",

SO THE MAN ASKED HIS MIND,

"WHT, WHEN I TALK TO LIFE, DOES IT SEEM THE SAME AS TALKING TO YOU?",

AND HIS MIND REPLIED, (SOUNDING SUSPICIOUSLY LIKE THE VOICE OF LIFE),

"YOU'RE GETTIN' PRETTY SHARP."

ONE MAN HAD A DUCK HE'D TAKE FOR WALKS -- OVER BY THE EDGE,  
AND THE MORE THEY'D WALK, THE CLOSER HE'D TRY TO TAKE THEM TO THE EDGE,  
AND FINALLY HE GOT THE DUCK TO WALK SO CLOSE TO THE EDGE  
THAT HAD IT MOVED THE LEAST BIT MORE IN THAT DIRECTION  
IT WOULD HAVE FALLEN OFF.

EXCELSIOR!, ME HEARTIES -- CHEER UP, BE BRAVE, MOVE ON WITH CONFIDENCE --  
IF A DUCK CAN DO IT -- YOU CAN DO IT.