Copious Stream

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The dusk sunlight emerged from behind a flock of gray clouds and lazily cast itself upon the skin of my neck, numbing my mind with a certain pleasurable warmth, an emotional delicacy of sorts, a rare dish I had not tasted in a long time. I remember lounging on top of a makeshift raft, crudely constructed out of several half-rotted timbers we gathered on the riverbank, shaped by confident hands worn with the scars of experience hard-won, of a peaceful state just recently realized after years of torment. Gently we floated down the path of the sullen stream, caring neither for direction nor for any particular frame of mind, content merely to wade through the depths of our souls, and be swept away by the current.

Doubt had been blazing at the forefront of my consciousness, sparked by a nagging question which in my mind was always a constant blemish on the face of reality: the omnipresent query, "Why?".

"Why what?"

I glanced over her elegant body, draped with layers of artificial fabrics and cheap paint which corrupted her natural beauty, and engaged the bright green eyes I knew so well. They were sharp and attentive as usual.

"If we are composed of mostly nothing, why must we endure so much? I mean, even at the most fundamental level, with our primary particles aimlessly shooting about the void, we exist as beings of relentless motion. Objects we perceive as solid are in fact only collections of atoms, composed mainly of empty space, constantly moving, always transient. Given this knowledge, how can we come to trust perception, to depend on it?"

She gently pushed back the hair a piercing wind knocked over her
shoulders, and casually tossed her head to one side before raising an eyebrow ever so slightly, informing me that she was pondering my question. Her quirky position amused me. I enjoyed just watching her move, examining the precision she gauged with each blink of an eyelash, with every motion of her pale arm. Two sets of mildly chapped knuckles began to rap musically up and down the length of the wood.

"The irony is we depend upon perception alone to condone a world which doesn’t care about how you see, or what you think about, or the intensity of your emotion. We seem somehow out of place, lost in an irrational dimension of the counter-intuitive. If you are one who values the quality of human intuition, you must be offended when told the real world is independent of your will, and of the rules you impose upon its forces. The ordered reality you project upon it is done merely to comfort yourself, to further delude your mind into thinking you have it all figured out."

I felt a torrid anger when I heard her voice echo throughout the valley. To consider the possibility of another person picking up those rapturous vocals was an unbearable prospect for me.

"Ours is a comical species," she mused. "The only one capable of intellectual diversion, of experiencing happiness beyond the primitive highs brought on by a fresh kill, or a successful mating season."

"Such thoughts further muddle my overworked gray matter," I replied. Her eyes met mine as she smiled.

"Language is the only barrier between us," she stated in an emotionless tone, glancing right through me as she spoke. I suppose they were words not meant for me, but for the Independent Arbitrator in the sky, the great one who watches over his clueless peons with lightning bolts of ruthless compassion.

"Why must you always appeal to that ambiguous god of yours?" I retorted with measured cruelty.

"He may be ambiguous, but that does not make my belief in Him worthless by any means. It helps me reconcile myself with the fact that mortality is an unavoidable burden I must bear, and faith in His wisdom has assisted me in dealing with eternity."

"A crutch of spirituality..."
"Not a crutch, a life partner."
"I cannot comprehend the notions which compel you to suggest an eternal power is responsible for all that is, was, or will be."
"I do not understand how you can believe that everything you see, all you know, all you have experienced has come into being by chance, by the roll of mother nature's evolutionary dice."
"Such tremendous gulfs of thought are difficult to bridge..."
"But if we do not start building, who will?"

The wind began to pick up fiercely, and my love took my hand as the water slowly welled up around us.