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As we fluffs of fiber float along in the beams of light, as we do every day, we all dutifully perform our acts of allegiance. We all look alike. We all float at the same speed. Since my act is a simple one, catching bits of dust, I seem to have more time than the others to look around and notice things. I watch the others float by but none of them really look at me. They seem to be all too preoccupied with their acts. I can't help but think that there is something else, something more meaningful for me to do. I grow annoyed with my position and the apparent apathy of the masses. I must stop someone and see if they feel the same.

"Excuse me, Sir Fluff, do you have a moment?" I asked in search of some advice.

"No, Sir Fluff, we must perform our acts..no time to stop!"

More annoyed by the lack of interest, I was determined to get a response. I stopped another.

"Fellow Fluff, do you know the purpose of your act?"

He hurriedly replied, "No time to think, just perform!"

SUCH INDIFFERENCE!!! Certainly some fluff among us feels as I do. I noticed an elder coming. Perhaps he can help. I confronted him directly.

"Please, Sir Elder Fluff, could you tell me our purpose?"

"Young Fluff, every fluff knows our purpose is to maintain the system of fluff's order."

"Yes, Sir Fluff, but why can't I perform a more meaningful act?"

"You are young, you must be patient. Maybe you will get a different act. We must all do as we are ordered."

"But why, if I can think of meaning, can't I perform meaningful acts?"

"You are not here to think, only to act."

"But that cannot be right for me. Is it wrong to dream of better things?"

"It is not right to think of difference. It is against the order. Change will only make for chaos. You must not show doubt in the system or you will be labeled an agitator and outcast from the masses!"

"Sir Fluff, would outcast be worse than this meaningless existence? I must find purpose. Is there no purpose?"

"Young Fluff, why don't you accept things the way they are? If you don't, no other fluff will accept you!"

"I cannot accept things this way because I'm sure there must be a better way. Why can't we change them. If I can think of better, why can't I make it real?"

"There is no reality but the systematic order of the fluffs. It is the way it has always been and the way it will always be. You cannot be apart of it - if you cannot accept it. I must label you an outcast. It is my duty. You have until the end of the beam of light to decide."

"BUT WHY?" I screamed, "Doesn't any fluff value thought? You perform your acts without wondering if they are good or right!!"

The other fluffs began to notice me now because I was causing such a commotion. Some glanced at me and murmured, "Agitator", but none of them stopped their acts. As I floated closer to the end of the beam of light, I felt desperate. What can I do? Where can I go? I MUST BREAK AWAY FROM THESE WALLS OF CONFORMITY!!

ORIGIN MYTH

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Once long ago Great Eagle and his brother, Red Bear, were sitting on the top of a mountain looking down on the earth which was then void of life. They decided the earth was lonely and that it should be covered with plants, animals and people. As Great Eagle was tired, he decided to take a nap, telling Red Bear they would begin making all these things when he awoke. Great Eagle slept for four days and upon waking, he found Red Bear had covered the world with red people, red plants and red animals. All the people were exactly alike; also the plants and animals. Red Bear had made all his living creatures immortal. They never ate or drank and they couldn't multiply as they were all the same. They did exactly as they were told with Red Bear giving all the commands. Great Eagle was very angry and he proclaimed that Red Bear's creations were no improvement over the way the earth had been before. Great Eagle began flapping his wings, making a great cloud of dust that covered the whole earth. The dust was so dense that Red Bear could see nothing until it settled, and as the dust settled, Red Bear discovered that Great Eagle had changed everything. There were now many varieties of plants and animals, and people were now a variety of colors. Great Eagle also made things either male or female so they could reproduce and multiply. There was now death in the world along with hunger and thirst. Great Eagle said, "This

is a much more exciting world where only the strong and the brave can survive." Red Bear swore he would kill Great Eagle for what he had done, but Great Eagle flew from the mountain top, gathering up all kinds and colors. He then hit the land with his wings, breaking it up and separating the pieces of land with the oceans. He then flew to an island that was far from the land of Red Bear where he dropped all the people he had gathered and he called the land America.

Great Eagle flew to the tallest tree she could find and built a nest where she laid a gold-colored egg. In four days, a small green baby broke his way through the shell of the egg, and in four more days he had grown into an adult. Great Eagle told her son that she had given the people of America almost total freedom, telling them that if they were wealthy, then God was pleased with them. Great Eagle told her son that the people were beginning to discriminate against each other, placing too much importance on race and social class. She said that in the morning she was going to tell the people that they were all equal so they wouldn't fight so much among themselves. That night, while Great Eagle was sleeping, her son whose name was Capitalism, plucked all the feathers from her head and made himself wings and flew down to the earth. He then told the people Great Eagle had sent him with a message. He then proceeded to tell the people that each race was superior to the other. He told them that money and power were most important and they should always try to outdo their fellow man. The next morning Great Eagle flew down to tell the people that they were all created equal, but they laughed so hard when they saw her bald head that few heard what she had to say. However,

the land grew and prospered, with the people buying anything that was new, big or powerful, anything that would help them outdo their neighbor. The white people claimed to be top dog. Whenever a man of different color would protest, the whites would claim that Red Bear was trying to destroy Great Eagle's land, and so the races fought and the people kept trying to outdo each other. Soon it became unsafe for the free men of America to walk down the streets for fear of being killed for their money. Great Eagle watched all of this and became very angry and decided to release the inflation monster. After the inflation monster came, the people found they had to work harder and harder to make a living, but they still kept trying to outdo their fellow man. Great Eagle's anger increased and he released a second monster, the recession monster. Meanwhile, under the tree of the Great Eagle, a woman named Bureaucracy gave birth to a baby who immediately grew into a man named Gerald. Near the place of his birth there was a lake. His mother told him to swim the lake four times. After he had done this, the water began to boil and from it came a golden sword which flew into his hand. Armed with the sword he went off to pursue the monsters.

M Y T H

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Once upon a time in the mountains of West Virginia, lived a man, his wife, and their three sons. Their twin sons were born first. They were very handsome, and drew great attention. One was a very happy, gentle child, and the other petulant and always complaining. The father was very pleased with the pair, for whenever he went into the small town they lived near, they were the center of attention. This pleased the father, and made him feel quite important. Even though the family was poor, the father would manage to keep some change from his meager purse to buy a treat for the boys.

When the children were three years old, the mother gave birth to a third child; also a boy. A more homely child you have never seen. The midwife who delivered the baby thought that "surely such an ugly child had to be a curse upon the parents. Perhaps they hadn't given to the church as they should have in the past year, or perhaps the mother had looked upon a beast, or maybe eaten something that was tabu during pregnancy." It was a very sad occasion.

Normally, a birth meant that well-wishing friends and neighbors would come calling, to look at the newborn and to discuss their own trials and tribulations of childbirth, but the parents were not eager for such visits.

Despite their secrecy, word soon got around that the family had a new child, and neighbors came calling. It was

just as they had feared. People were kind in front of the parents, saying that "he looked like a good child". (not handsome, mind you) But looks that passed back and forth between the visitors spoke more than words.

No one could understand how such pleasant-looking parents could have such an ugly child. His father could not hide the disgust he felt for the child from the moment he first saw him. The mother's concern and pity for him caused her to spend much time with him, trying to compensate for the father's lack of attention. The father, jealous of the time and affection his wife gave the boy, caused him to say unkind things to the woman, blaming her for their sudden misfortune.

Instead of improving with age, the boy seemed to get worse. More and more he looked like a wizened old man. He had little to smile about and seldom spoke, but he was always good and kind and generous.

Rejected by the other children (except for the kind twin), he spent many hours alone in the woods, watching birds call to each other and observing the woodland creatures drinking from the creek nearby. Sometimes the loneliness was more than he could bear, but not being able to understand how or why he was different, it was just easier to isolate himself in the woods.

One day while out in the woods, he met an old woman. She was sitting on her porch in a rocking chair, smoking her pipe. She beckoned him to come onto the porch of her little cabin and sit down. He was surprised that she would want to speak to him, no one ever did. She asked him why he spent so much

time alone in the woods, and he told her that people made fun of him, and that the forest was one place where he could escape the criticism. She told him that he must do something to make his value known to the town; that his looks showed much wisdom and that he must put this wisdom to work.

The old woman told him that first he must learn a trade; to be useful and self-sufficient, but he told her that he knew no trade. "Old woman, I have never gone to school, as my parents were ashamed of me. How am I to learn a trade?" The old woman arose, went into the tiny cabin, picked up a small knife from the table, and returned. She told the boy to go to the woodpile at the side of the house and get a piece of maple. Dissatisfied with the first two chunks, the third proved to be what she wanted, and as the boy sat there, she took the knife to the piece of wood with such skill as he had never seen. Her hands flew this way and that, turning the wood and knife blade, whittling it into the shape of a rabbit. There was no doubt, it was as pretty a rabbit as he had ever seen.

She told the boy to come back each day and that she would teach him to be a fine craftsman with wood, and that perhaps he could sell the pieces in town. The boy agreed and returned home.

On the way home, he was met by the father and the unkind twin, who demanded to know where he had been. "Only to the woods," he replied; whereupon, his father switched him for keeping the family waiting supper. The twin taunted him about his stupidity, but the boy said nothing.

That night, the boy decided that he must leave his home, that he could no longer take the cruelty inflicted upon him by

his father. He packed his belongings and before it was light, he crept out of his bedroom window and into the early morning mist.

The sun was well up by the time he reached the old woman's cabin; she was hoeing her corn when he appeared. He took the hoe from her, and without a word, continued to finish the job that she had begun.

Later, while they were resting on the porch from the heat of the noonday sun, he told the old woman that he had left his home. She knew that explanations were difficult for the boy and so she bade him to rest and be quiet.

The old woman was good to him. She gave him a cot to sleep on in the kitchen, and he in turn, chopped wood for her cook stove, and kept the garden free of weeds. And in the many hours of nothing to do, she began to teach the boy how to work with wood.

She took him into the woods and told him about the trees. "The pine," she said, "grows straight, and is easily worked with hand-tools; from the resin you can make salve and remedies. Oak is a very hard wood; white oak makes good barrels, tubs and buckets, and green oak is good for simple furniture. The locust tree is one of the hardest woods. It's difficult to work. It makes good foundation blocks and pegs. Hickory is a hard wood. It is good for smoking meat, cooking and heating; it's especially good for making wagon parts." She showed him others; "Black gum, cherry, ash and poplar, but the best, if you could get it, was maple."

The boy was a good student; he showed great patience and a

natural aptitude for whittling. The figures he turned out were even better than her own.

Finally, one day after some time had passed, she told the boy that he should take the figures into the town and sell them, but he replied, "No, I am afraid that I might be ridiculed." Seeing that the boy still did not feel his worth, she told him that she would take his figures into the town herself. Reluctantly, the boy packed them up and helped her with them to the edge of town. She took the figures to a general store, and showed them to the owner. His eyes lit up as he unpacked them. Never before had he seen such skill.

The cabinetmaker in the town demanded to know who had turned out such fine workmanship, and on the third trip into the village, the old woman told them of the boy.

Pleading with the boy, she convinced him to go into the village, for there his opportunity would be much greater. His skill and appreciation for the working of beautiful wood would be rewarded. But most of all, he would realize that he was a person of great worth.

The boy consented and went into the town. People watched him work, and marveled at this remarkable talent.

When the father found out about his son's success, he strutted and crowed about how he was responsible for the boy's success; whereupon, the boy denounced his father, saying, "You have rejected me all of my life, Father; please do not take credit for what another has done."

Before long, the boy was able to open his own shop. He offered to teach his older brothers what he knew, but pride

would not let the unpleasant twin accept; he left town. Soon after, the father feeling rejected, died. The younger boy moved back into his own home once more. The kindly old woman who had taken him in and helped so much, had simply disappeared.

Thereafter, people were heard to say, "How could we have ever thought that this beautiful person was ugly? Has he changed or have we?"

HOW EAGLE IMMORTALIZED HIMSELF

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Eagle was talking with his brothers, Buffalo, Coyote, and Whooping Crane one day. "The Earth is abounding with buildings nowadays; there is hardly anywhere to roam in the wild, beautiful Mother Earth. Where are we to go?"

Buffalo made answer to him. "O Brother, what difference does it make whether or not we have land to roam?"

"Yes," answered Crane, "the greedy human would kill us were we to show ourselves in the wild. What is the use for asking a place in which to live if we will but be killed there?"

Coyote said, "Money drives these humans. If they don't want our skins to sell, they kill us to protect their precious herds and crops. And if those reasons don't suffice, we are killed for sport."

"We have so few of our numbers left that it will not be long before all of us, even we four, are gone," Crane noted.

"It is indeed a sad situation," Buffalo added, shaking his head dejectedly.

As Eagle and his three friends parted company, Eagle could not accept the disturbing fact that his species, supposedly revered by American peoples as their "National Bird", was facing extinction by the hands of the very people who love "him. He determined to try every way he could to make the American people realize what devastation they were bringing to their own precious wildlife. Eagle flew home to

consider his best plan of action.

The following day, having made up his mind, Eagle departed. He gathered all of his courage and flew to the national office of NBC, a television station. There, he talked with the executives, begging them to let him speak through their network to the American people. "They must know what they are doing to us with their ever-growing cities, pollution, and greedy, monetary-minded hunters. Wildlife is being killed, maimed, and destroyed; the Humans should know of this, and should know that they are the cause."

The executives pooked his suggestion and threw him out into the street. Eagle tried the other networks also, but received no sympathy or help.

Dejected and humiliated, Eagle flew home. Once again he met with Buffalo, Whooping Crane and Coyote, telling them of his experiences.

Buffalo offered a suggestion. "If we are to be forever remembered after we become extinct, which seems an inevitable fact now, we must do something!"

"What could that be?" asked Coyote.

Eagle suggested that each of the heads of these four dying species must determine a way of immortalizing his species.

"Although this will not be easy, it must be done," Eagle concluded.

"The children of future generations must somehow know of us!"

The four agreed, parting company to embark upon their tasks.

Eagle thought and thought, as he flew home, of what he could do to immortalize his species. He was saddened to think

that this would become a necessity for any form of wildlife, particularly of the species "beloved" as America's National Bird.

Eagle devised three alternatives by which eagles would become immortalized. The first involved his going to the National Zoo in Washington, D. C. He gave himself to be on display for people to see, taking his wife with him in order to perpetuate (and immortalize) the species. However, this environment was not the answer. Children could not see him flying naturally, living his life normally. He was too confined; also, the number of people able to see him was extremely limited. When he complained to the zookeeper that this was inappropriate as an immortalizing device, he was thrown out of the zoo. Eagle was now ready to embark on Plan #2.

He flew to the home of an artist who was sympathetic to the wildlife movement. The artist agreed to paint Eagle flying freely over the land. When the painting was done, it was hung in a national Art Gallery. Though the painting was good, the number of Americans to see it was still too limited. This method would not work as an immortalizer. Eagle thanked the artist, then moved on to his final plan #3.

He visited the United States Mint. There he spoke with the officials. These men were sympathetic to his cause, but didn't feel they had any form of immortalization to offer Eagle. They did allow him to visit the mint, however. As Eagle was viewing the making of coins on this tour, an idea struck him. "Coins are something ALL Americans, young, old, rich and poor deal with. Perhaps if I could get myself onto those coins

somehow..."

Then Eagle made a dramatic decision. He decided to give his own life for the immortalization of his race. Below him bubbled the melting vat for the coin metals. He flew upward, poised himself, then flew straight down toward the vat. As he dove, he reflected how sad a state of affairs it had become that he had to reduce himself to becoming a part of greedy America's monetary system in order for people to preserve him. With that thought, he flew into the vat. From then on, the eagle has appeared on three of our coins (25¢, 50¢, \$1.00). That is how Eagle came to appear on our coinage, and that is how Eagle immortalized himself.

HOW INDIVIDUALITY RETURNED TO MAN

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Once, not so very long ago, there was an age when all the important work in this country was done by machines. It was a time now remembered as that point where human life meant very little, for the very few people in the country who did work only did so to keep the machines from breaking down. And always the cogs of that technocratic society were being made newer or improved, for it was then thought that nothing finer could be done to make life better.

Machines planted, harvested, and prepared all food and drink for our ancestors. They carried people near and far. The great system of gears and servos even made interplanetary travel possible, with the sole purpose of gathering materials to make newer and better machines.

For several years it looked as if mankind had reached the utopia for which it had always strived. Thinking became a national pastime. Everyone listened to the machines talk (for few people bothered with the effort of reading, when it wasn't necessary), of the hard days gone by, and of history. Men and women spent everyday in thought. They invented mental games, solved theoretical problems, and even learned from the repetitious mistakes which had occurred throughout history. Warfare, crime, and hunger all ceased to exist, and our ancestors slowly settled into the hithertofore-unknown sublime world of leisure. Years of harmony passed quickly - as did the indi-

viduality of the people - and they became merely a mass of numbers - accompanists to the symphony of machines. At best, people were classified according to what they liked to think about. It was a time of peace throughout the world.

According to old dating systems, the year was 2525 A.D., when a boy was born to a couple of history-thinkers in Dogseye, Vermont. It follows that he should have lived his life as had his parents - thinking about history; but this boy was rather strange. Instead of using the number-name given him by the machines at birth, he adopted the name Lucky Strike, which he had come across in some old twentieth century manuscripts. His strangeness to the mechanical environment was exemplified by his love for reading, which was considered an arduous chore at the time, and by the fact that he tried to do more with his hands than merely push buttons and pull levers.

Lucky Strike found out early in his life that he could make people believe almost anything by singing his words instead of speaking them. By using this gift he achieved the prominent position of oiler for Maximus II, the machine which controlled all the other machines in the land. Lucky's 'job' was one of about ten such tasks in the country involving physical exercise and coordination, but he was very dissatisfied. The one thing he disliked most was the lack of meaning life had for his fellow men.

One day, while thinking of history, Lucky decided to formulate and carry out a plan to put some sense of individuality into men everywhere. He began by not oiling Maximus II. After

a week, machines everywhere were ceasing to function properly. As the country stirred slowly into wakefulness as to the nature of the mechanical failures, Lucky Strike assumed the spotlight and began to sing old blues tunes and work songs, and because of his strange powers of persuasion, Lucky caused people everywhere to wonder just what it was like to work with their hands and to actually build and accomplish things. Soon this spirit spread across the land. Instead of sitting and thinking only, folks everywhere sang songs and sought out or created manual tasks. Most machines were allowed to rust, or were disassembled altogether. People planted their own gardens and even competed with each other in physical contests and games. This then was how the hero, Lucky Strike, saved mankind from perpetual mechanical bondage.

WHY THERE ARE NO KINGS IN AMERICA

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During the Great Undeclared War, the god of Peace searched the world for a mortal to lead the warring kingdoms out of conflict. He sent his messenger to the greatest of the lands in the guise of Henry of Kissinger. Sir Henry went into the kingdom of Nixonland with the message of the god of Peace and delivered it to King Richard. The king knew better than to disobey the will of the gods even though his land's economy was built around the war, and so, he sent the god's messenger to the kings of the other lands to talk to them of peace. After King Richard granted many concessions to the other kings, they decided to end the Great Undeclared War and let the king of Nixonland rebuild their blemished kingdoms.

As a result of the messenger of Peace's mission on earth, King Richard became a hero in the eyes of his followers and his country. Whenever his name was mentioned it was in regard to the great new peace. In order to maintain his image, the king started going to forbidden kingdoms such as that of Mao, Breshnev, and Hussain on missions of peace. His fame as a peacemaker was spread to the four corners of the earth, and he was exalted to a position near that of the immortals.

King Richard's peacemaking lasted but a short while for his councils were becoming bored with so little to do. Although Richard was the ruler of the mightiest kingdom in the world, he was not the wisest of kings. He had in his council many devious

men who worshiped the gods of Power and Possessions. These councilmen prayed and made sacrifices to their gods in order that these gods' influence be felt by their King of Peace, and so it came to pass.

King Richard listened to and was influenced by his evil councils. He became overcome by Power and Possession. The king became so filled with craving for Power that he violated all the rules of the kingdom in regard to his would-be adversaries who were highly-respected noblemen. He sent out his councils and his royal guard to spy upon the men who would test his leadership. He obtained information as to their beliefs and used this information against them on the political battlefield. Through devious tactics he annihilated all his opposition.

Then, having secured his throne, he became obsessed with the goddess Possession. He started amassing great fortunes and hid them in his new castles in the provinces of Florida and California which he built through the money obtained by overtaxing the poor. He became close allies with the Princes of Power in the kingdom, Prince Standard and Prince Att, because each could gain from the other. King Richard was so obsessed with his new Power that he claimed to be the most powerful mortal or immortal in all the worlds.

Such words were echoed in the realm of the gods and came unto the ruler of all gods, Justice. Though Justice has no eyes, she hears quite well. The words of the mortal King Richard arose the wrath of the greatest of gods. She sent her emissaries, the Plagues Inflation and Dissent, out among the

peoples of the Kingdom who were apathetic and docile creatures. They became as lions thirsting for blood and took interest in their kingdom and its leadership. They saw scandal after scandal, misuses of their trusts and frivolous usage of the kingdom's wealth. The thought of revolution filled their hearts and they began to rid the kingdom of its tyrants. They started by overthrowing some of the royal guard. Sir Liddy was the first to feel the wrath of the peasants. Then came the ousting of the corrupt councilmen, Sir Dean, Sir Haldeman, Sir Ehrlichman and many more. They even threw out the evil commissioner of law, Sir Mitchell, and the heir-apparent, Prince Agnew.

When the threat of a violent overthrow finally descended upon King Richard, he was compelled to abdicate the throne, never again to wield his Power over the lands.

The goddess, Justice, was pleased with this outcome. She had taught the evil gods, Power and Possession, a lesson they would not soon forget and neither would the people of the kingdom which is once again the United States of America.

G R E G O R

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The people lived in the Western land, the Eastern land and the Middle land. In the Western land, the young people were very handsome, and they named their land "California." The Eastern land people were very good workers. They liked to build very tall buildings with no windows. They lived very close together and did not like the outside places. They named their land "New York." The Middle land people did not like the Western land people or the Eastern land people because they talked strange words. They liked animals best and built great houses for them. They also liked growing food which they also built houses for. They named their land "Kansas."

In the Western land the children became very proud of their beauty, and the elders wanted this beauty very much. The elders began changing and soon there were no parents. All the Californians became very young and no one was left to perform ceremonies.

The Eastern land people, who were good workers, built many buildings but soon there were buildings everywhere and the sun could not reach the earth there. The air became very bad and they could not breathe very well. The New Yorkers lived close together in the dark and they began fighting together with each other, for they could not see who was their family.

The Middle land people, who liked animals and growing food, became angry for no one in the Western land worked now since they were all children, and they could not pay for their food. They were angry also because the Eastern land people fought all the time over the price of the food. The Middle land people began changing. They could not feed their animals because they had no money for seeds, so they sacrificed them for they did not want the strange fighting Eastern people eating their food, nor did they want the children of the Western land growing strong on their plants. The Kansans hid the food they could grow and told no one.

There was a young boy in Hays, Kansas, named Gregor. He had a dream one night of a great Space Being. The Space Being, Antar, told him that soon there would be terrible things coming to the peoples of the West, East and Middle lands. Antar told Gregor that he must go to the Flint Hills and find a special cave. There he would discover three tablets which would tell him what he must do. Gregor told no one about his dream. But he soon began preparing for his journey. His three older brothers asked him what he was doing when they saw him taking some food from the silo. They did not like this and tried to stop him. Elmer, the oldest brother, jumped on Gregor's horse and started straight for Gregor to trample him. But Gregor whistled and the horse stopped suddenly, throwing Elmer crashing to the ground to his death. Then, Buddy, the second brother, called for the cows and the bull to come and poked the bull and then ran away. The bull started charging toward Gregor and there was much dust in the air. Suddenly, Buddy began to sneeze

so he pulled his red handkerchief from his jeans and the bull seeing this turned toward him and gored him. Then, Joe, the third brother, jumped upon the tractor with the cultivator rake on the front, and started toward Gregor to seek revenge for the brothers' deaths. Gregor seeing this, threw a rock in the path of the tractor and it overturned, crushing Joe. Gregor then left for the Flint Hills. He wandered and wandered, looking for the cave that Antar had told him of. Finally, he saw a glistening rock and when he touched it a cave suddenly appeared. Then he saw three tablets of gold lying inside the cave. He could not read the tablets at first, then he found some glasses of many colors which he put on. The first tablet told him he must not tell anyone of what he was doing and to collect all the magnet-rocks from the area. The second tablet told him he must begin building a space ship which would fly into space because the magnets would repel gravity. The third tablet told him that soon there would be a terrible flood and he could be saved. He worked hard, alone, gathering the magnetic rocks and building the space ship.

Soon the Mississippi River began swelling, swelling, swelling. The people of the West, East and Middle lands began moaning and crying. The waters spread to New York and all the buildings without windows fell down and many, many people were washed away into the Atlantic Ocean. The waters also spread to California, and the many children with few parents were washed away into the Pacific Ocean. The waters then came to Kansas and the hiding places for food were destroyed and many,

many Kansans were washed away into the Gulf of Mexico. But Gregor left in his space ship and was soaring above all the terrible floods.

Soon the sun was shining in New York. It dried up all the waters because it could reach the earth there now. And a few New Yorkers had clung to the Statue of Liberty. And in California the waters receded because of the mountains. And a few elders lived there because they were strong enough to hold on to the mountain tops. In Kansas the wind blew and soon there was a tornado which sucked up a few people from the waters. Soon the waters were all blown away and the tornado dropped a few people back to the earth in Kansas.

The people started gathering their things together to begin living again. Gregor returned to Kansas and there he had another dream. Antar once again came to him and told him that he must learn all the good of the world and make laws for the people left in the nation. So, Gregor read all the books of the nation and soon people began coming to him for help. Then Gregor had another dream and Antar told him it was now time to give the laws to the people. He gave laws for distributing their food so that all could eat. He told them how to build buildings so that the sun could still reach the earth. And he told them how to keep the air clean. He told the Western people how to remain young without being children so that families could still stay together. The people loved Gregor, for his counsel was good and because he was so strong and healthy. The nation flourished and soon there were many, many, many people again.

But pretty soon there were so many people that they could not all remember the rules. The old ways began to come again. Gregor's laws were not remembered and the fighting broke out again, and the children multiplied and multiplied. Gregor ran away and died of sorrow for Antar had told him how to find the right ways, but no one would listen. The nation, hearing of his death, remembered the laws and the elder ones wept. The Western land people sent shells from the beaches for a monument that the Easterners wanted to build for Gregor. The Middle land people asked that the beautiful monument be placed in their land, in Kansas, so they could always remember Gregor.

HOW DEATH AND DISORDER CAME INTO THE WORLD

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In the beginning there was god, because the people believed in god. God created the sun and reserved it as her home, and then he created the earth, the sea, the animals (including humans), and the plants. She arranged all of these elements, balancing them one with the others, setting them in order, establishing a causal system in which all aspects of earth would affect each other. And god exerted a great deal of effort to keep everything in order; he was protecting his investment.

At last god grew tired of the constant vigilance required to keep the earth in order. Frankly, she was becoming bored with her world, in which everything was predictable. So god caused electrical disturbances in the atmosphere, a bolt of lightning set a dead tree afire, and then god turned his back on the world, causing darkness. God knew that the first animal to see the fire would recognize it as an important gift, and learn to use fire during the night when god was not watching the world. Sure enough, a human found the fire, and taught his brothers about fire. For a time, god was satisfied. She was relieved to pass some of the responsibility on to humans, just as parents must eventually relinquish control over their children. God rewarded the people by giving them languages and rudimentary technical skills, by teaching the humans to take care of themselves. He also gave humans life in the spirit world after death, eternal life, and allowed them to unite themselves in orderly groups in his name.

But as time passed, god became uneasy about the manner in which humanity was developing. They were cutting down her trees, killing her animals, burning off her grasslands. But what could god do? He had given the people their freedom, and couldn't very well take it away from them, especially as the people were becoming powerful in their own right. Then god decided that the nature of the world she had created would not allow the people to get too far out of line, or they would destroy the world and themselves. So god decided that his investment was well protected; after all, man would surely never go so far as to destroy himself.

Nevertheless, as more time passed, god became even more worried about the recklessness of her people. Such wholesale destruction of the environment! And worst of all, human exploitative successes so far had allowed the human population to grow dangerously large. The resulting shortages brought humans together in warfare. God realized, when humans began

to kill each other, that these humans were entirely capable of destroying her handiwork, including themselves.

So god tried another tactic. Because disorder had not kept humans in line, god decided that perhaps teaching humans the order of their world would restrain their recklessness. After all, all parents teach their children something about order; just so god decided to explain the larger rules of the world to the people. Therefore, god ejaculated several particularly strong bursts of solar radiation, which fell upon a woman planting seeds in a burnt-out area of the forest. This woman became pregnant and gave birth to twins who, though outwardly identical to other infants, possessed special minds, slightly mutated by god's radiation.

These children were called the Essences (but better known to us as the sciences), and as the Essences developed and matured, they began to recognize the order of causality. They taught themselves to isolate recurring segments of the order, to call these segments rules, and to use these rules to predict what would happen next. They built machines and powered them with more of god's precious resources. In effect, they learned to make their lives easier, but they gave very little attention to finding the proper position of humans among the order of things. In fact, they often decided that the order didn't even apply to themselves.

Obviously, god said to herself, those people have missed the point again. But since man had grown so powerful through god's gifts, god could no longer control his creation. So he resigned himself to losing his investment, and sat back to alternatively watch, then turn his back on, then watch again, the people.

In fact, as the people learned more and more about the essence of order, they began to doubt that god even existed. And when the essence of atomic order was realized, the people knew for sure that the sun was nothing so spectacular, much less a god. Thus did the Essence twins destroy the creator of their parents. And when god was dead, the people lost eternal life, for when they died they could never more be removed to the spirit world by their former god.

So we have seen that the people gained freedom, knowledge, and responsibility for their actions, but because of these things, death and disorder came into the world.

ANOTHER FANTASY
OF
CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CULTURE

Mary Klem

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There were two men, one black, one white, and a girl sitting at a long table in a bar. I had nothing else to do so I went to the table to try and get in on the conversation when the black man said, "There's no room."

"There's plenty of room here," I said, and I sat down at one end of the table.

"Would you like some wine?" the white man said.

Seeing that they were all drinking beer, I said, "I don't see any wine."

"There isn't any."

"Then it isn't very civil of you to offer it."

"Well, it wasn't very civil of you to sit down uninvited either."

"I didn't realize it took invitations around here. There is plenty of room here."

"Your hair needs to be cut," the black man said.

"You make awfully personal statements for a stranger."

The black man sat up in his chair and looking offended, simply said, "Do you know why a bird is like a table?"

Ah, I'm glad they changed the subject. "I think I can guess that."

"You mean you think you can find the answer?"

"Well, yeah, that's the same thing."

"Not at all," said the black man. "You might as well say, 'I see what I get' is the same as 'I get what I see'."

"Or," added the white man, "You could say 'I like what I get' is the same thing as 'I get what I like!'"

The girl spoke up and said, "Just like you could say 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same as 'I sleep when I breathe'."

Perhaps it is the same for you but not for me," said the black man. "Have you guessed the riddle yet?"

"No, I give up, what is it?"

"I have no idea."

"Well, I think you could do better things with time than think up stupid riddles with no answers!"

The white man interrupted here and said, "If you know time like I do you wouldn't talk about wasting it! What do you know about time anyway?"

"Well, I know that I beat time to music."

"Ah! That's it! Time doesn't like to be beaten. If you'd keep on good terms with him he'll do anything for you." The white man thought for a moment and then said, "In other words, Suppose it were 8:00 in the morning, time to go to work. All you'd have to do is give time a hint and the clock would go around until it was noon, time for lunch."

"That'd be OK I guess, but I wouldn't be hungry yet."

"Not at first, but you could keep it there as long as you wanted."

"Is that what you do? Make it whatever time you want it?"

"I did until I got in a fight with time. Now he won't listen to me. I never know what time it will be from one moment to the next. I've gotten to the point that I disregard time altogether. I just sit here with my friends and drink beer and tell stories."

"That must be a terrible way to live," I said quite sympathetically.

"Not at all. Have some more beer."

"I haven't had any yet, how can I have more?" I said.

"You mean you can't have less. It's a lot easier to have more than none."

"Maybe, but I don't think..."

The black man interrupted, "Then you shouldn't talk!"

Well, that was more than I could take. I got up and walked away. It was enough for them to play word games, but their insults! What a crazy bunch of people!