

Cecil

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A story about an odd little man.

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He plunged the knife into his heart, perforating the walls. In one crude and dramatic motion an amazing biological pump turned into a useless flailing mass of muscle.

It didn't hurt although the pain was intense and written in his eyes. Or at least one of the unfortunate onlookers thought. It's possible this was just a way to cope with the horror of seeing such a sight. What is certain is that the splashing sound was almost too comical and crass for such a grand gesture. What else was certain was this was indirectly the onlooker's fault.

The onlooker's name was Cecil; a fact he considered as solid evidence that his parents had begun to hate him shortly after he left the womb. He wasn't sure what he could have done for them to plot against any future happiness or normalcy he might have.

Cecil stood up from the wobbly chair he was in and walked out of the coffee shop while trying to be invisible.

The way the people kept walking in that early summer style as if they had nowhere to be but in the sun almost made Cecil feel as if this was another strange dream. The kind of dream he tried to avoid every night.

Cecil turned left down the sidewalk because he could feel them in the other direction. Also there was a small wooded park this way.

This was one of Cecil's favorite places in the city; something about its relationship to the surrounding area almost made the park invisible to the attention of anyone not specifically looking for it. It was a sanctuary for horny couples with little shame and less money to spend on a hotel, drug addicts walking the line between life and death, and people like Cecil who felt like they were on the lam from life. Cecil had heard that was the geomancy of the park, although that originally sounded stupid to him. It now seemed like the most sensible thing.

"O.k. Cecil," he said to himself as if conversing with another human being, "they can't see or hear you."

Turning his head in the opposite direction in pantomimic mockery of the friends he wished he had. "You never know, maybe it's a ruse to lower your guard," spoke Cecil, giving flesh to the constant doubts in the ether of his mind.

Turning his head again Cecil nearly whispered, "Seriously I don't think God or Goddess knows of this place and I'm sure the Devil and his demon friends don't either. No, just us people who've lost their souls can find this place."

Cecil's acting the job of his friend said, "Have you seen the vice and sin committed here? I'm sure the Devil knows this place."

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Although it irritated Cecil his so-called friendly companion kept speaking, "In fact this may be a level of hell Dante didn't feel was worth its cost in ink to mention."

"How many times do I have to point out these two things?" Before he could get an answer Cecil continued speaking despite the perturbation of his friend.

"The Devil didn't create sin; that's between mankind and God or Goddess. He just professionally deals with it. And the inferno is fiction; Dante only went to hell once for blasphemy and by that time it was too late for him to pick up a pen."

The fake friend asked, "So are you saying this is the perfect place to sin?"

It feels good to Cecil when he does not have to directly state his point.

"Yes a thousand and five-hundred seventy-five times, yes that is exactly what I'm saying," Cecil tried to say indignantly but his giddiness shone through.

Although he has an apartment with a bed this is the one place it is safe to dream. So on the park bench he laid himself down to sleep.

And he dreamed he was in the city and it was empty. There was no sense of disaster or apocalypse, as if everybody and every spirit had spontaneously decided to get the hell out of there. He walked familiar streets and noticed many strange little things. Like graffiti that hinted at some type of mystical curse enacted by common gestures. He kept walking feeling light as air and wondering if he was a ghost. A bird lands on a lamp post and he understands it is confused by the intrusion on its hermitage. A house cat slips out of a window. It is wearing a grey business suit. The cat looks at him then holds one forepaw toe up to its mouth to communicate "keep me secret." The cat climbs the light pole like a human would. It walks on hind legs towards the bird. In a single graceful motion it grabs the bird and gluttonously shoves all but tail feathers into its mouth. Then repeats the sign of secrecy and then gulps the whole bird into its stomach. It smiles contentedly.

Cecil wakes on the bench to the muted sounds of sex. It's hard not to laugh at the way they verbally encourage and congratulate each other.

Cecil wishes he could be invisible so he wouldn't have to pretend to be sleeping, just to avoid embarrassment.

Some short time later he knew they'd find him again. They always seemed to, no they always do. Cecil was and is unsure as to what they are. Ghosts? Angels? Devils? Top secret government agents? Future people? But Cecil knew they were not projections of his own mind. He knew they protected him in the worst and most over the top ways possible. For example that was them at the coffee shop (you know the "self-mutilation slash public suicide"). No one else ever seemed to see them, but how they suffered at their hands.

"If I told anyone about them I know they'd think they looked scary," Cecil seemed to be telling the open palms of his hands.

Of course no one else on the bus heard the mouse admonish Cecil, "Of course I know all of this but you'll tell me again."

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“You are one of the few friends I have that even has any good advice for me,” Cecil still seemed to be chatting into his hands. “You seem to understand people far better than me.”

“Cecil anyone understands people better than you, so why not get counsel from anyone,” said the oddly toadish mouse.

Caught up in the thought that that might actually just be a good idea Cecil absentmindedly dropped his friend Tristan the toad mouse.

If the driver hadn't swerved his car and skull into a brick wall it is certain he would have certainly hit Cecil, as Cecil was wrapped in the process of thought instead of the process of safely properly crossing the street.

Who would make a good anybody? Would literally anyone make a good anybody? Cecil certainly hoped not. Too many good choices leads to a type of psychological paralysis. Like when a restaurant menu has hundreds of excellent choices. Increase that dilemma to literally everyone except Cecil and you'll understand the transfixing degree of this conundrum.

The sound of the car crashing only partially distracted Cecil. His first and purest thought on seeing what we assume to be brain matter on the brick wall was “I guess not that anybody.”

Of course they were there; and as Cecil nearly pointed out to Tristan, they didn't look terrifying, but comical. In fact they looked so comical that Cecil had to vacate the area before he started to laugh. The people would understand if only they could see them.

Cecil had to egress (my word, not his) otherwise people might think he was sick and twisted laughing at death.

Of course there was one place he could go and no one, especially not angel or devil, would care about the laughing maniac. Cecil's one refuge was shattered. They were there with their comical faces and movements gathered around a junkie, a syringe still stuck in his greyish arm.

It was more than he could take and Cecil yelled as if possessed by a lion, “Who are you, why do you keep killing for me, and what do you want?!”

The funniest looking of the bunch stepped forward and said, “We are divine comedians, we've been trying to get your attention so we can tell you the funniest joke.”

Cecil did agree no joke on earth, heaven, or hell could be funnier.

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