

HEIDI CHRISTENSEN

*Imagine*

*All the People*



# *Imagine All the People: Florida*

*Dedicated in Loving Memory to Dr. Ronald C. Foreman*

*Professor of African-American Studies*

*University of Florida*

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth, on Planet Florida. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

It is impossible to fail when we imagine the possibilities to solve every problem. Our results may fail every so often, but when we collaborate to improve our methods then we will eliminate failure and deliver best results.

Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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The warm sunshine, a hot buttered rum drenched marigold, dawned over diamond white sands of Miami Beach, as Mother sipped espresso from her favorite Moka Express, one she had since she was age 12. As was her custom, she rose before dawn and enjoyed her Café Bustelo from the beauty of their boudoir balcony while Father slept.

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Her eyes feasted on the flock of seagulls, the ladybugs, gardenias, honeysuckle, and orange blossoms. Whoever said she was too flowery did not understand what it means to be rooted in Florida, land of flowers.

Sea salt air impregnated with fruit and flowers tickled her nose, until Father tickled the nape of her neck and took her back to bed, for the marriage bed is undefiled. The marriage bed where I was invented 18 years earlier was a different bed today than it was back then, yet it was eternally the same. As a home cooked meal from home grown vegetables is sweeter than salty junk food consumed while driving, so was the marriage bed where I was invented a perfect harmony of rough and romantic, soft and sweet, tender and torrid, for the marriage bed is undefiled.

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Father saw something he had never seen in her eyes before; fear. He stopped ruling over her and flipped her on top of him to discern his bride. In their sweet, languorous rhythms where they flowed into one another, tiger lilies reflected in her navy-blue eyes. Colors of the sunrise and sunset reflected from the carrot top curls from root to crown chakra. Her fear was not of him, but of the special knowledge she always held in her heart, where pain knows no secret recesses. Red skies in the morning; sailors take warning. Red skies at night; sailor's delight. Mother, Dixie, knew she would not see Sven at sunset, their ecstatic ministrations etching their love deeply into their flesh and spirit. My Mother, Dixie, knew she would die that day. Yet she pressed forward and resolved herself to escort Isis to her shopping and spa trip that day. In Florida she was born, and in Florida she would die. The land of flowers was also the land of sudden death and sudden birth. She shaded the sunset from her mind's eye and gazed adoringly at this perfect man beneath her. She always marveled at him, her Adonis, and always thanked God he found her. His warm, caramel smooth skin pulsed beneath her as she massaged his scalp beneath his thick butterscotch hair, and fluttered his green eyes.

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He slowed his pace and touched her on the scar she never mentioned on the starboard side of her lower back. Tears fell like spring rain as he guided her on top of him, for the marriage bed is undefiled. He saw variegated shades of Florida sunsets and sunrises as he wondered what storm welled within her. Orange Cream Popsicles, Mangoes, Birds of Paradise, and Carrot Cake seemed to make a fancy dance in her eyes and on him as she drew his seed into her with an aching slow, deliberate rhythm, for the marriage bed is undefiled. Only one thing would save her that day: if she felt his seed multiply within her. When my Father, Sven, rocketed to her moon, she did not feel life multiply within her womb. As her sweet spasm collected his payload, she collapsed on top of him and wept as he cradled her. She fell asleep as a billion seed died within her slumbering body.

Hello again, Neighbors. It's me again. Charity. I am the sole product of Mother and Father's marriage bed, a miracle of the most dangerous force in the entire Universe. Love. This is the story of what really happened in Florida. Mother never wanted me to know, and she never burdened anyone, especially children, with her lore. Her stories I seek and share to help you know you're not alone. Only men who value battle more than birth believe that apathy is the most powerful force in the world. Mother knew better. Caring and birthing were far more powerful forces, and to return good for evil was the true test of spiritual discipline.

It was a morning that started like many others, yet it was a day Dixie knew well. She knew from the spiritual gravity in the sultry morning air that this would be the day she died.

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She didn't like to be called Dixie, unless it was from family or very close friends. She preferred to be called any sobriquet Father gave her: Angel, Alegría, Joy, Leggy, Honey, Baby, Sweet Cheeks, Mrs. Sven Olsen.

Who was he, truly? He was so handsome and perfect that he didn't seem human at times. How had she truly been blessed with her husband, a man of honor, who truly adored her as much as she adored him? This was the great mystery of her life, and she embraced any pain for the pleasure of him.

She fell into a deep slumber, which seemed to last a hundred years. Every memory wafted through her mind like the smell of homemade carrot cake wafting through the oven of her life. Florida. Where she began is where she ended. Her life began in Puerto Rico, the sweet spasm of Mother guided in Father's explosive rush before he left for Vietnam. She remembered how people embraced Mother when Father died before she was even born, exclaiming how Mother would have a good son. Florida.

She remembered her Mother's beautiful long, thick, straight, black hair, often swept high on top of her royal head, giving her a sense of authority. She remembered Mother rubbing her back gently, so she could get to sleep when hurricanes kept her awake on Twin Hickory Hill in Chipley, Florida. Florida. Land of flowers.

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Memories of waves crashing up on Saint Simon's Island turned into the tin penny nail sound of rain on the hot, rusty tin roof of the Stout Family Farm home. Although their Florabelle, Florida home seemed like hell at times, it was still her home. It was there she clutched her first copy of The Prince, read in secret beneath the mulberry trees North of the pig pen and chicken coop. Underneath the mulberry trees she understood Niccolò Machiavelli's wisdom as a warning for what happens when people fail God's law, not as a license to do evil. She wondered if that's what Tupac thought too when he read Niccolò Machiavelli. Florida.

Florida's shape on the map was often likened to that of a semi-automatic firearm, a very crude analogy in her perception. She preferred to think of it as a Peninsula with a Panhandle. Florida. Dixie remembered the day a malefactor walked into Aunt Ida's home without warning while she was studying The Bible and percolating a pot of pinto beans on her brand-new Magic Chef stove. Aunt Ida could have easily grabbed the .22 Remington rifle next to her rocking chair and killed the man, yet she chose the spiritual warrior's path. Aunt Ida ran for the scalding hot pot of pinto beans, threw them on the deranged man, and proceeded to beat him with her King James Version of the Holy Bible. Florida.

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Florida. Go on vacation; leave on probation. She remembered going with Aunt Ida to visit this intruder in Raiford Prison when he was caught and sentenced on outstanding warrants from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Aunt Ida was all he had, until he finally accepted Jesus Christ as His Lord and Savior. No family members would ever reach him, yet Aunt Ida visited him until the day she died. A pioneer woman whose honor was incorruptible, Aunt Ida was like many ladies born in the American Southland, whose beauty was far more than skin deep. Florida. The Bible Belt that was in Aunt Ida's concept a tool belt to win all souls for Christ, not as a stinging leather whip lashing and cutting the skin. Florida.

Wisteria, thickets of honeysuckle, jasmine, canopies of muscadine grapes and banana trees perfumed the air as Spanish Moss danced languorously from the mighty Oak trees. Florida. Dixie remembered the first time she brought a squirrel down with her sling shot from one of the mighty Oak trees on the Stout Family Farm. Mr. and Mrs. Stout were proud of her when she made them squirrel gravy and cathead biscuits for Saturday breakfast. Florida.

Most of all, she remembered the sweetest blessing of my birth pains, and my diapers hanging on the laundry line, something Father found quite common and almost embarrassing. His comparably upper middle-class life as a Military BRT (Born/Raised/Transferred) often governed his sense of "keeping up with the Joneses". Yet Mother would have none of his offers to purchase her disposable diapers or a diaper service, when she was proud to wash and change my cotton diapers herself, knowing that one could only have flowers if one had soil. She was safe in her faith that God had always given her flowers no matter how much soil seemed barren. Charity. Me. I was her favorite flower, born in Florida, like so many of her generations before.



God is bound to us when we are obedient, as she learned one morning when she and her foster sister, Clara, walked to Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church as Mr. and Mrs. Stout slept all day Sunday in Florabelle, Florida. Florida. She remembered wearing the shawl Clara crocheted for her, as they walked arm and arm through the woods to the one room Church with its wooden pews. Florida. She remembered how Clara's beautiful blonde hair glowed that morning after the Lord's Prayer, and how she begged the congregation to hide her and take her far away from the Stout Family Farm, where nothing good would happen to this fair-haired child. She was happy to stand in for Clara and take a beating when she got home without her that afternoon, since she was the Stout Family's red headed stepchild. Florida.

She remembered auditing a course at University of Florida when she worked at a Taco Bell nearby, where she was finally fired for being too slow and spending too much time cleaning up the cockroach nests and scrubbing the dining room with loving care. She remembered the wise welcome of Dr. Foreman, who was rather amused at this freckle faced young lady who audited his African American Studies class, often wearing her Taco Bell uniform, her red hair wild and tangled in her attempt to restrain it in a bun.

Florida. She felt the dull, dooming ache inculcated into her that night at the Watergate Hotel years later. That terror visited her gut again when she visited Smathers Library East for the second time, when she was doing her best to complete a report on Florida's role in the international slave trade for Dr. Foreman. That terror came when her Williams Family history documents she studied the week before were completely missing in action. All three boxes of letters, daguerreotypes, and mortgage records of people held in bondage were gone.

The librarian was as still as a stone and stared her down as he asked for her student ID, something she could not provide as an auditor of Dr. Foreman's course. His stark stare was a reminder that her ideas were not welcome here, and Dr. Foreman was barely tolerated, especially after he refused to move to the College of African Studies, insisting instead to remain within the College of American Studies. Black folks were not a small dot in America from a large dot in Africa. White was within Black, not the other way around, a simple chromatic fact most people failed, especially in Florida. She refused to spend the money she accumulated through stealth, hard work, & the many cases the Legal Worker resolved on her behalf on a college education, in part for this reason. Each institution wanted you to think what they thought, not to learn what God wanted you to know. Dr. Foreman never treated her like the only white girl in his class. He treated her like all of his students, as a necessary building block to future generations. Here was the truth. Florida. The land of flowers, which had in the 1990s become a police state it seemed, an economic prison, in the words of Mr. Ice-T. Florida. The land on which James Weldon Johnson, Eartha Mary Magdalene White, and Zora Neale Hurston were born, had plenty of opportunity for prosperity, and even more opportunity for false imprisonment. Florida.

She remembered how Mr. Ice-T visited University of Florida shortly after her independent study was sabotaged. He was not allowed to speak in the stadium yet remained positive about speaking in a smaller venue on campus. Dixie was a bit scared to be too near him in person, forever aware that she was a danger magnet. Mr. Ice-T, an Army Veteran who shared her distaste for the American war machine, would always be safe. She prayed he would live long enough to hold his great-great grandchildren, although she knew she would not. Florida.

She remarked how smooth the hands of the well-heeled members of Sigma Alpha Epsilon were, as they marched up and down University of Florida campus in their modern grey twill Confederate uniforms. Unlike her ancestor, whose toil was beyond imagination in Washington County, Florida, these young men seemed ill prepared to carry out their motto given by General Robert E. Lee: *Dieu et les Dames*. Their presence did not make her feel safe. She did not feel their duty to God and womankind, but their idolatry of a lost war. Typically, one does not brag about second place in warfare so much as the American Southland. Although few women could match her in humble knowledge of the American Southland's history, no one could understand how she a woman named Dixie could believe the future was just as important as the past. She wondered what General Robert Edward Lee himself would say to Florida, a state that denied the significance of Juneteenth, yet commemorated June 3<sup>rd</sup> as an official Florida holiday to mark Senator Jefferson Davis' birth. When he was a Mississippi Senator, before he was paraded through the streets as President of a conquered nation, her namesake, Dixie, she wondered if he felt for a time like his middle name. *Finis*. Jefferson Finis Davis. She certainly felt that way at times, as his own Mother declared he was her final child, that she was finished with childbirth. *Finis*. Perhaps that is how too many American women felt; failing to discern womankind's resource economy. Money doesn't matter as much as honey, a fact Mother mentioned almost daily. Either the new generation is born on a nation's soil, or they travel here from another nation. No nation survives disdain of birth and idolatry of battle.

She remembered how proud she felt to receive a letter from the White House, in return for her thank you to President Carter, who restored American citizenship to Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. She remembered how happy she felt when she taped a shiny nickel to her handwritten thank you note, explaining how she believed President Carter's actions would help the American Southland move on and embrace eternal values, abandoning the idolatry of the American Civil War in its crude popular culture. Rebel flags emblazoned with profanity, nude women, skulls, and racial epithets were a disgrace to her Ulster Scot roots. ***Dieu et les Dames.***

She remembered the first time she met Isis, who beat her with her fists, yet she retreated, for Dixie was truly born to defend ***Dieu et les Dames.*** The many instances of this cascaded through her imagination, shuffling like cards in a deck, or a CD on shuffle, giving her an encyclopedia of her experience.

**Help Him Kill You** – Dixie knew that any man who would attack a woman and/or child was a coward, so the best course of action was to prepare for her wedding with Jesus Christ and welcome him with open arms and open legs. Draw him in and help him kill you. Such courage made her attackers go limp from limbs to loin and gave her time to escape.

**Never Hit a Woman.** Always escape. Enough said. ***Dieu et les Dames.***

**Never Kill a Child.** American women compared to women around the world become a sad caricature of womankind when they return evil for evil, as in the case of rape. Rape is and always will be an evil act, yet so is abortion. **Never Kill a Child.** Warrior women recognize that the trend of anti-natalism in America's consumer culture will soon be replaced with children. Children are our future & we do not seek equality with men who wish to kill anyone, especially not vulnerable, defenseless children.

**Encourage His Arrogance** – Dixie made a good living by keeping silence when arrogant men underestimated her. There were enough wise, humble men who appreciated her that she did not concern herself with the arrogance of others.

Above all, she remembered how she would know this day would come. Between the comfort of being Sven's bride and the discomfort of being the Bride of Christ, she knew not to question God. She drifted awake and descended the stairs to find her breakfast of buckwheat blueberry pancakes prepared and left on the warmer with a note,

"See you for supper, Angel. Love, Sven".

She kissed this relic of her precious husband, folded it into her left bra cup over her beating heart, and slowly ate the provisions he prepared with love.

She fashioned herself in a Spartan manner after her shower, dressed in Levi's, her favorite "Live '85" Black Flag t-shirt, and Doc Martens combat boots.

## Imagine All the People

Isis, her dear friend, and confidante, arrived at their doorstep with a vibrant smile and an infectious enthusiasm. She was blissfully unaware of Dixie's premonitions but was ready for their much-anticipated shopping and spa trip. Dixie greeted her with warmth and embraced her tightly, cherishing the friendship that had blossomed over the years.

They embarked on their journey, their laughter and shared stories filling the car as they cruised along the palm-fringed roads. Dixie couldn't help but marvel at the beauty of the world around her, knowing it might be her last chance to absorb its vibrant colors and intoxicating scents.

As they strolled through the bustling markets and explored quaint boutiques, Dixie's eyes sparkled with an inner light. She savored every moment, savoring the simple pleasures of life. Each interaction, each smile exchanged, became a treasured memory etched in her soul. She prayed without ceasing, in thanksgiving for my life. Charity. Faith, hope, and charity, yet the greatest of these was charity, another word for love, as she taught me from 1 Corinthians 13. Charity. Florida.

She saw that malefactor in her mind's eye that morning, long before she left our home, and so helped him kill her when she realized this was truly God's call. Yet this time, this strategy did not help her to escape. However, it did save Isis' life. Before he could approach Isis with his wild-eyed intentions, she embraced him and brought him to the ground, straddling him with her arms and legs as his death device detonated. His sex went limp as she straddled him and gazed into his ice blue eyes, yet his death device detonated. She counted it all joy, as God counts the hairs on his bowl cut head, awaiting his judgment. **Help Him Kill You.**

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A sign of the times is not whether women can vote, but if temporal governance truly reflects their values. Death and destruction are opposite values of womankind. Life and intuitive wisdom are her highest values. A sign of the times is that the Second Amendment has become the walking middle finger of the entire Bill of Rights. A sign of the times is that people value implements of death more than life. A sign of the times is that people misunderstand the United States Constitution as an excuse for their apathy towards all God's children. A healthy constitution is one that gets enough clean water, nutrition, sleep, sanitation, exercise, and most important, love.

A sign of the times is that a woman named Miss Dixie Joy Pride, Mrs. Sven Olsen, aka Alegría, Leggy, et al, cared about the health of nations more than her own life. This is truly the sign of charity. Thanks for listening.

This has been an unofficial 23:59 report from the Universe. Imagine the possibilities when we connect through compassion and mutual guarantee.

#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy #Juneteenth #Florida

## Imagine All the People

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as the Dahlonega, Georgia. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

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***Dedicated in loving memory to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.***

The Caregiver quieted her mind after drinking steamed milk with nutmeg sprinkled on top. Miss Bessie Mae, the new Kitchen Manager at Dahlonega Gardens, fashioned the drink for her after a 22 hour shift.

The tryptophan in the milk made its calming effect, as Dixie, who preferred to be known simply as the Caregiver, wondered what plant based drink could sooth and quiet her mind like cow's milk. Her mind wandered as she wondered, making herself super cozy on the hand sewn muslin mattress filled with Goose Down from Mr. Johnson's hunting trip with his Marine Corps last September in Rutherford County, Tennessee. He was happy to bequeath his surplus to the Caregiver, since she knew better than to make the maladroitness faux pas of referring to him as a "former Marine". This would be as stupid as calling María her "former Mother", instead of her late Mother.



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She reminisced on Mr. Johnson's generosity to help her make a loft bed in his immaculate engineering space. This was a more accurate way to think about what most people called the janitorial closet. When people celebrate and come out of their closets, we learn their true gifts and genius. Mr. Johnson's genius was a quiet, humble thing, which is why he was being uplifted by his granddaughter to a lush weekend in Savannah. She prayed for his safe travel and let her mind drift into that sacred space between imagination and reverie, also known as memory.

She remembered the first time she quickened the Legal Worker's imagination, to use a sticky situation to get control of four diamond mines West of Welcom, during the official reign of Apartheid rule in South Africa. She remembered how they legally scattered it until she returned it to its rightful owners.

She remembered how she and the Legal Worker patented inventions her Father made before and during his Army service. She remembered how she rushed home to care for her foster siblings after school those hellish days after Mom claimed her own life years ago. She remembered how thin the line between reality and fiction was for her, and how to use it for the group's best interest. She knew how privileged she was, but instead of lingering in the negativity of guilt, she kicked it into the positive gear of duty.

She remembered how happy she was to receive Miss Esmerelda into Dahlonge Gardens almost a day ago, after she was discharged from ER for breaking her arm. She slipped on the steps carrying her laundry in after gathering it in from the clothesline. Life hadn't been easy since her son, Benson, left Atlanta for New York City. Like any Mother, she was proud of him for his achievements, although she was more proud of his character.

Mis Esmerelda had little use for the reports and probabilities of the stock market, although she realized it was the number one source of financial capital in America. She also knew that it was directly linked to the exploitation of people all over the world, particularly in Africa. She trusted her Benson to make his way home by Christmas, as he had for the 10 years he had traveled home from Atlanta after whipping through his economics and finance studies at Morehouse College.

She trusted God since her husband died too young, having worked on the railroads since he was a child. Her Devron was always in her mind and heart, and he was heavy on her mind when she unclipped the sheets, towels, socks, and house clothes from the laundry line that late afternoon with the perfumed garden wafting its intoxicating scent in her soul. Where was that special locket he gave her when they first married? It was a 14k gold locket her Devron bought from his Uncle Dryer. He had their initials engraved on the outside and inside was a mustard seed. She had kept it all these years, and now she could not find it in spite of searching every pocket, jewelry box, and couch cushion.

The Caregiver dreamed in shades of deep greens and blues, like the colors James Taylor would choose every time he sang Sweet Baby James on 540AM WDHL that seemed to pour from her treasured RCA clock radio. She remembered every detail of Miss Esmerelda's story, listening and making verbal cues as she busied herself to prepare her suite.

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No one asked her where she got the resources to make life more comfortable for her Clients, and she never told. That's why the Caregiver preferred life in Dahlongega to life in Washington, DC, where she escaped the glare of memories seared red hot into her holy parts, and prayed for a better day. Few people in Dahlongega cared how much or how little money a person had. They cared about how much someone cared about other people.

Her calm mind sifted through Miss Esmerelda's stories as she remembered hanging pictures of Mr. Devron James Eldridge on her walls. She remembered the pink flutter in her heart when Miss Esmerelda complimented on her homemaking skills. She remembered filing her nails after helping her take a hot shower, as they languored over her bedtime preparation. The Caregiver smiled when Miss Esmerelda admitted she had always thought the Caregiver was weird and strange. She didn't care for her name, nor could the Caregiver blame her. Being named after a conquered nation was both a blessing and a curse. Dixie. Mrs. Eldridge only knew how odd Dixie seemed, with her wiry orange hair and her quiet ways. Miss Esmerelda didn't know who was inside the entity named Dixie Joy Pride until today, but now she knew why everyone called her by her preferred name, the Caregiver.

Miss Esmerelda's story hurt her, to think how this precious Lady had slipped on her acorn and Spanish moss-covered porch steps, with a basket of sun dried laundry in hand. Her story telling wafted scents of magnolia and jasmine growing on the picket fence in the Caregiver's imagination. Mr. Eldridge had built this beautiful white picket fence years ago, and planted grapes, hyacinth, jasmine, honeysuckle, and magnolia there. He gave her a perfumed garden that stayed with her much longer than a store-bought bouquet of flowers. The summer patina of vegetation and dry rot slicked up the wooden steps that needed to be painted two summers ago.

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When she slipped and heard her right radius bone snap, the gleam from the 14k gold locket and chain struck her like sunshine. She rejoiced, picked herself up, and stooped under the steps with her left arm. Finally! She retrieved the missing locket under the porch steps that she hadn't been able to find since she came home from Wednesday night Bible study at Blue Ridge Missionary Baptist Church. She had not been attending since she hated to come home alone to an empty house. It only felt like a home, with the warm glow of her Devron looking over her from the memories everywhere from dawn to dusk.

Now she remembered that strange feeling of something tickling her neck that night as she ascended the steps towards her front door. God hid the necklace, yet He never hid His love. Miss Esmerelda rejoiced, and called 911, very happy to trade her pain in for the pleasure of connecting with God's grace and this beautiful memory her Devron gave her in the locket. She had held on to that mustard seed through many trials of life, and had let it go, since it really only was a material object.

Yet something didn't feel quite right since her locket went missing. She had a nervous stomach. She didn't sleep quite right. The Caregiver read these symptoms as she told her story, then her mind shifted from deep greens and blues to the white-hot fury of that one night.

She knew better than to go to their room, yet peculiar to her nature as a silent warrior, she always walked towards danger. She had always preferred Howard Johnson's, a brand long since extinct, as she prayed the Watergate would one day be extinct. Perhaps it would be turned into the re-education camp so many so-called white people who were civilian take-take-takers feared. That would be poetic justice.

She rarely accepted jobs at the Watergate, and now she knew why her intuition was correct. Now she knew the source of all the contraband she found in the dumpster downstairs from Aunt Brownie's condominium, not far from the Watergate Bakery.

She knew when she entered the room that night that it would be alright for her to lose her life, but it would be devastating for her not to get the information. That's what she was hired to do.

She remembered how she coaxed the malefactors at the innocent edifice so idolized as the Watergate. She had only been hired to clean their room, but she knew quite well there was a reason they could not clean it by themselves or call room service. It was a disaster. The stench of vomit and the spewed crumbs of pistachio muffins told a tale of torture her mind assembled as she field stripped the entire room. The spray pattern of the crumbs and chunks of baked goods in the thick texture of stomach bile told a tale of torture and death that tempted her stomach to turn as she scrubbed it away with vigor.

She saw all four of these men, who resembled Max Headroom, and excited every evil stereotype of Russia, encircle her with jeers. She knew her fate was sealed, as she knew that the masculine genotype's base proclivity was to search and destroy. They wanted to destroy her and weaponize their sex. They were the reason she didn't mind those men ruled the world, since she knew this was nothing of which to boast. Satan ruled the world; women had the power to be the compass towards Heaven and hell.

Only when women denied man his sick pleasure would he elevate himself. Yet Dixie encouraged their arrogance, by humble devotion, cleaning up every trace of the tale that had unfolded that horrific night. It worked. These malefactors made a wonderful mistake. They did not speak in their native tongues; they spoke French.

The entire suite looked cold and sterile, with its abstract paintings hung carefully above the television set, the sofa, and the bed. The gray carpet had been scrubbed clean with her own hands after she vacuumed before and after treating it with baking soda and a toothbrush. The kitchen floors smelled of Mr. Clean, a scent that had comforted her so many times. It might seem ridiculous that she had a platonic crush on the character who was Mr. Clean. She imagined Mr. Clean to be a gay man who always helped her sanitize the filth in her life.

She was just a red headed stepchild to the KKK, as her movements and flaming curly locks convinced them. She was just an orphan. She encouraged their arrogance with every move. She was nothing to nobody, and her quiet competence in cleaning the entire suite from its foyer to the living area, the bathroom and bedroom convinced them she was a total idiot who would never understand a word they said.

They continued with their wonderful mistake. They spoke in French because they were convinced, she knew some Russian and Urdu dialects. Unlike the upper middle class so-called white children who idolized Che Guevara, Dixie knew that any country who conspired with the USSR had been responsible, directly or indirectly for every American Armed Forces casualty from the Korean War to the Vietnam War, to present day. She studied their tongues in her own way, so they spoke in French that horrific night,

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She didn't beg them as they advanced on her, but she coaxed them not to harm her most holy parts while she cleaned their bathroom. The filth of death was in there, and she cleaned it as only she could. They kept their word. They did not break her hymen.

Yet they harmed another part of her and recited to her with their ice blue eyes and terrifying annunciation what they already knew. She would obey them forever or they would kill more Americans. They would kill her precious members of the United States Armed Forces if she walked out of step with their foolish, authoritarian demands.

When Dixie died years later, it was said to be when Hillary got elected. It was true enough that the Illinois born Methodist child did not earn title as President of the United States in 2016, but Hillary was elected in the heart of every child who endured sex work when she helped make rape shield laws a Federal matter in 1994. Learning to take it "like a man" made Dixie a stronger woman. It gave her a quiet way to relate to people seeking restorative justice.

Justice could not be restored in a courtroom unless it was restored in the hearts of those who created the injustice. In that moment of pain, Dixie recalled all the stories from young Black boys she met at truck stops along Highway 441. They told of how they were paid cash for starring in 8mm camera films shown at smut shacks littered all over Florida highways and by-ways. What horror! Black men were likely greater victims of sexual exploitation than any living creature during the 1970s, since exploiters were more fascinated with the girth of their loins than the breadth of their mind, body, and soul.

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She remembered stories from Mothers who broke down and cried, speaking of the horrors they endured during wars, and from men held in POW camps who rarely spoke of such horrors. Why do people weaponize sex? They know not what they do. That's the only way Dixie could understand forgiveness. Like the Roman centurions who nailed Jesus Christ to a cross, they know not what evil they do, and she prayed for their souls that they would know and repent before they died to their flesh.

Dixie was never afraid for her own life. She lived in a constant state of terror for the lives of those lost in the United States Armed Forces, as does every child who loses a parent to warfare. She hated to be called a gold star family, since she had been alone except for God's love from such a young age. Worse yet, she hated herself. Her freakishness. Her aloneness. Her strange morph of feeling less than zero was actually her greatest strength and vulnerability.

Gold stars were not a welcome thing, but a symbol to be tolerated, like a foreign language between two different planets praying for peace. It seemed America was divided increasingly into two Planets: those who took everything and those who gave everything.



## Imagine All the People

She loved what she could do with herself and trusted the Black leaders whom others called pimps and criminals who put her in the Watergate Hotel that horrific night, although the base part of her still feared them. Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; fear of proper authority is a very good idea. It seemed to her no one remembered *Jus Ad Bellum*, or “rules of war”, meaning whoever wins the war is the proper authority. Black leaders had given their lives in every bloody battle from 1776 to 1861 to present day, and as of 9 April 1865 when Robert E. Lee surrendered at the Appomattox Courthouse, they were the proper authority of the entity known as the United States of America, and soon the entire world.

She took every shame stroke from the malefactors and let them inculcate into her mind everything she needed to know. It was a *fait accompli*, and her health was the only casualty that horrific night. She did her duty and called the Legal Worker. The rest is history, and she happily kept it shaded in the beautiful black of that horrific night. Attorneys never needed to litigate on her behalf; they needed only to be magicians and make situations disappear.

It was a welcome thing to be judged stupid, crazy, retarded, ugly, and unwanted by a Yankee nation that had forgotten the love of its own people. It was a welcome thing to pour Yankee money out like Red Zinger iced tea from her Tupperware pitcher on a sweltering August day. It was better to abide the economics of MC Hammer than to hoard resources God meant for us to enjoy with one another.

## Imagine All the People

She allowed her mind to shift deeper into that horrific memory, to find the mustard seed in the pain, as Miss Esmerelda had. She never begged for her life, and took the punishment in her backside, as they made her watch two United States Soldiers being murdered in Afghanistan over live satellite feed. One with his smooth ebony skin, the other with his ruddy freckled skin, both killed instantly together. When women respect what men endure in battle, men will better respect what women endure in childbirth. The year of that horrific night at the Watergate Hotel was 1983, and even today it seemed people preferred the failure of rape, pillage, and burn over God's way of love, village, and learn.

Most of her life was purposefully lived on the razor's edge of the fantastical and the faithful, giving her the leading edge over most people on Planet Earth. True intelligence was only something God could design. It cannot be earned with a badge, enforced by violence, nor stolen by murder. This is what she knew about most people that were ignored by a Yankee nation that forgot the love of its own people. Everyone was intelligent, and wisdom would always be far more important than intellectual agility. If you want to learn another language, connect with people who came from Haiti & Cambodia to work in the laundry room of Dahlonga Gardens. If you want to learn how to set a bone fracture, speak with Gail, an Appalachian healer who stopped her formal education after she earned her CNA so she could pay for her daughter's college at Georgia Tech.

Where was the mustard seed that came from all the hatred of war? Why did the USSR invade Afghanistan in 1978? Why did the United States invade Vietnam and cost her Father's life? Why did Mr. Stout beat her and all his foster children? Why did he and his gaggle of KKK cronies exact crime on the Florabelle community? These were questions only God could answer, but she quieted her mind as she fidgeted in her sleep, and drew in a deep breath. These things were a part of her life, and were one reason she couldn't even stand to have a bottle of Kikkoman Soy Sauce on her table, for the trigger of a triple "k" anywhere in her sight. The eleventh letter of the English alphabet, "k", was an innocent thing, and she begged God for mercy from the shock and trauma attached to the terror. KKK. She wanted to be somebody's daughter, not Mr. Stout's "Dixie", not the weird girl known as an orphan, not even the Caregiver. With that, she settled into the loving arms of Our Lady, imagining the Blessed Mother soothing her and rocking her in her sleep. Yes. She was somebody's daughter, thanks to the Virgin Mary. Jesus Christ loved her. God loved her. Mary loved her. She repeated this thought as a silent mantra until it quieted her mind.

## Imagine All the People

Finally, she found the mustard seed. Shifting her imagination to deep greens and blues to more colors than her slumbering mind could choose, she remembered Sergei, the new Maintenance Manager at Dahlonga Gardens. She recalled how he disliked to be called by Mr. Saranov, yet appreciated the respectful formalities peculiar to the American Southland. She recalled how he asked Florine, the Switchboard Manager, always to interrupt him if his wife and children called him at work. She recalled how he stopped the use of Round Up in the gardens, and used tobacco dust to help control the harmful pests. She remembered how he helped her install a special fluorescent reading lamp to Miss Esmerelda's bed board, so she could read in bed with her special table meant to accommodate her broken arm. Everybody born in the entity known as the Soviet Union was not a malefactor. Sergei and his family gave her hope. They were her mustard seed.

She overwrote the bad files in her mind with Sergei's pleasant manners and soft speech, not calling him out for having a Russian accent. She remembered how proud he was to see her hang Dr. Martin Luther King's picture in Miss Esmerelda's room, and knew more about Dr. King than most so-called white people born in America. Here was the mustard seed God gave her from the USSR. Sergei and his family were good people, and he gave her a way to commemorate King Day in a beautiful way on this January 15<sup>th</sup>, long before the blessed occasion of Dr. King's birth became a Federal holiday.

## Imagine All the People

She remembered Miss Esmerelda caressing her cheek and thanking her as she prepared for sleep. She remembered Mr. Benson Eldridge calling from New York City, quite worried and panicked over his Mother's condition. She remembered how calm he felt after speaking with her and his Mother, feeling confident his beautiful Mother was in loving hands. She remembered how Jethro went and bought new supplies to reframe and repair Mrs. Eldridge's entire porch when the Caregiver gave him a thick wad of cash. She remembered how she washed her hands with Irish Spring soap vigorously after she touched what would always seem to her such dirty Yankee money.

Finally, she imagined her own Mother and Father, holding hands in Heaven and smiling down on her as she slumbered peacefully on her little loft. She found the faith of a mustard seed to move mountains of hatred in her heart, to the joy of service. Yes. She was somebody's daughter.

### **La Récupération**

Avant la récupération

Je lui ai donné toute ma vie

Cet homme incroyable, je l'adore

Il m'appelle sa mariée, car

Il est Dieu

mon corps, mon cœur, mon esprit sont tous pour Lui

Car Il m'a réclamée

Je n'avais rien de l'innocence  
Après que les brutes m'ont violé  
J'ai détestée ces brutes  
Je me suis détestée moi-même, je me suis violée

Je n'ai rien de l'innocence  
J'ai violé moi-même sans doute  
Je me suis faite avortée, stérilisée  
Me détester moi-même, je me suis violée

Je n'avais rien de l'innocence  
Jusqu'au soir où il m'a réclamé  
Je l'adore notre Dieu qui est né  
l'homme de Nazareth  
et sa Mère, Marie  
Enlacée dans ses bras, j'ai été guérie  
Enlacée dans ses bras, j'ai été guérie

Je l'adore mon Dieu, Jésus-Christ  
Il a le courage de me réclamer  
Pour m'adorer et me protéger  
Transcendant l'éternité

## Imagine All the People

Maintenant et toujours je suis innocente

Parce qu'il m'a réclamé

C'est bouleversant de lui donner

Ma soumission, mon adoration

L'Eucharistie m'a donnée son corps, son sang

Sa promesse

Sa protection

Transcendant l'éternité

Je n'avais rien de l'innocence

Jusqu'au soir où il m'a réclamé

Je l'adore notre Dieu qui est né

l'homme de Nazareth

et sa Mère, Marie

Enlacée dans ses bras, j'ai été guérie

Enlacée dans ses bras, j'ai été guérie

This has been an unofficial 23:59 report from the Universe. Imagine the possibilities when we connect through compassion and mutual guarantee.

#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

Imagine All The People: Blondie

## Imagine All the People

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as Dahlonega, Georgia. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

It is impossible to fail when we imagine the possibilities to solve every problem. Our results may fail every so often, but when we collaborate to improve our methods then we will eliminate failure and deliver best results.

Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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Dedicated in Loving Memory to [Ms. Lillian M. Stratton](#)



## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver awoke before her new RCA clock radio alarmed with 540AM. The May air was impregnated with the scent of budding magnolias, freshly cut grass, and dew on their tiny, tidy garden. She gazed out the jalousie window of her little room in the double wide trailer at the Happy Haven Trailer Park. It was the best place she had been in a long time. Mr. and Mrs. Greene took her in to barter chores in exchange for room and board. Now that Dixie aka Joy aka Alegría aka the Caregiver was in residence, Mrs. Greene enjoyed the opportunity to rest, relax, and do her favorite aerobics video while Mr. Greene was at work. She knew better than to put in a Jane Fonda workout VHS tape when he was at home. Mr. Greene never spoke ill of anyone, but just the image of Jane Fonda robbed him of a peace that was often elusive after he returned to Georgia from Vietnam.

The Caregiver wondered when her peanuts would yield their tasty legumes. Would they be ready by August? Would she purée them with some basil leaves and pepper sauce to make peanut sauce? Would she make peach ice cream with the fruit from the trees generously lining their little lot? In the six months she had lived there, she had turned a cluttered space into a home that was well organized, sanitary, and super cozy. She had their home jam up and jelly tight, as Mother used to say.

Instead of her favorite new talk show host, a familiar disco song came on when the numbers rolled to 06:00. Heart of Glass by Blondie played as the Caregiver wondered where the man from Missouri who stood up for her Father was. Sometimes he talked crudely, yet he always stood for America's Veterans. "What was his name?", she wondered as she made her bed, washed her face, brushed, and plaited her long, curly, auburn hair.

## Imagine All the People

As she made boiled eggs and oatmeal with raisins, pecans, and cinnamon for herself and the family, it came to her. She surrendered her brain activity to the wonder of the water rolling, boiling, and rushing over those farm fresh brown eggs. Rush Limbaugh. That was his name. She made the sign of the cross and prayed for him and his show to come on again soon. It seemed many people hated him, but he saved AM radio stations all over the rural Americas from going out of business. So it was with everyone. You had to find the good in everyone, even when you didn't agree with them.

She had Mr. Greene's Gazette ready with his coffee by the time he sat in the chair. "Thank you, Missy", he said with a smile as he lumbered about the dining room in his overalls and socks. He read the paper quietly as she and Mrs. Greene chatted about the day's events. She had to be at work in three hours. Mrs. Greene was always coaching her on how to be on time to Dahlonga Gardens. It seemed there was always something that pulled the Caregiver off her path and made her late everywhere. Truth be told, she was terrified to leave her bedroom, much less the house and the Happy Haven Trailer Park. Yet she pressed forward and understood how vital it was for her to be on time to relieve the night shift workers at Dahlonga Gardens.

## Imagine All the People

Mr. Greene passed the Gazette to her, which she read as he chatted softly with his wife. Dixie, the Caregiver, read more about emissions control laws and wondered how Bessie Mae would make it to Atlanta in her Dodge Charger. Miss Bessie Mae could not afford the test and license, but she had to take her brother, Dwight, to the VA for surgery next month. She never drove except to get groceries or to Church. Dixie shifted her mind from these new laws and her eyes fixed on the cartoon page. There it was again. Blondie. The theme kept coming to her all morning. She never read the cartoons but studied Blondie Bumstead carefully as the kaleidoscope of colors in her beating heart played Heart of Glass by Blondie.

Her shift at Dahlonge Gardens started with the quiet cheer of helping Miss Freida walk without her cane. There is no way to avoid pain in this life, but the best way to power through pain is together. Miss Freida had been left alone in her trailer one unusually cold night after working her shift at the local Ace Hardware. She had done her best to keep herself and the little home she shared with her husband in ship shape, but it had been a challenge once he died.

When she awoke in the biting cold of the North Georgia winter night to discover the propane tank empty, she slipped on the porch's invisible ice in an attempt to bring a space heater into her bedroom. She laid there in the cold singing "I'll Fly Away" as loudly as she could until Bubba called 911 for help.

Six months later, now she could walk on her own. She had great plans for winterizing the little trailer, whose most cozy feature is that it was clean, tight to the elements, and paid for in full. The Caregiver regarded Miss Freida's presence as that of a Queen, as she did of all people who served the proper King in gentle, resourceful ways.

Second Story Johnny was the opposite of Miss Freida. He had been violent and greedy most of his life because that's all he saw in the homes where he roamed in the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood in Queens. A foster child who had never been affirmed as a worthwhile young man; he took to peeping on any woman he could. It made him feel closer to the mother who abandoned him in 1945, as happens during times of war. He could feel nothing but sorrow and hatred for both his mother and father, but he didn't know who they really were. He only knew how short and wimpy he felt, how rejected and other he seemed, how he hated his own identity and preferred to be called by the insult of Second Story Johnny. The coal haired young man with wide dark eyes like olives and eyelashes like Queen Anne's lace, who had been caught at age 9 ascending a stray carpenter's ladder to place women under surveillance as they undressed and prepared for sleep, was really just a scared child making poor choices.

Although he had been caught in New Jersey and West Virginia for his crimes, he wasn't truly repentant until he came to Dahlonega, Georgia. In the aforementioned jurisdictions, he had been caught by the ladder's owners and arrested by proper authorities. In city centers, proper authorities are often only thought of as Law Enforcement. In rural Georgia and most of the world, proper authority is meted out by anyone who defends herself against an aggressor.

So, it happened one night after Second Story Johnny, now an adult man whose birth certificate said, "John Doe", climbed up on the ladder left by Grandpa Davis in front of his granddaughter's window near the Courthouse in Dahlonega. Grandpa Davis, an Old School Military Man, learned of this young man's past and wanted to perform an experiment about justice and honor. Grandpa Davis had educated his sons never to disrespect women, and he educated his daughters always to believe they could annihilate any man who attacked. Here is the sex education the world needs.

What Second Story Johnny didn't know is that Alethea had broken world records for softball, had just graduated from University of North Georgia magna cum laude, and was preparing herself to teach softball in Sweden. Grandpa Davis told her to watch out for herself, because she might experience trouble this evening. He told her with a wink that he left the ladder to complete the paint job outside her picture window. Intuitively, Alethea with her long black hair and green eyes knew what her beloved Poppy meant. She was to bait any malefactor new to town and introduce him to a better way of life by any means necessary.

She put on quite a show as Second Story Johnny watched from the highest rung of the wooden ladder propped up near the picture window with its lovely pink satin pillows and curtains. He gaped at Alethea as she primped in front of her vanity in her pink terry cloth bath robe, imagining what was underneath. He loosened his hands from the ladder to pleasure himself as Alethea took a large milk glass jar of Pond's Cold Cream and appeared to rub it on her breasts. What she was really preparing to do only occurred to him when the heavy milk glass jar of Pond's Cold Cream hit him like a cannonball in his left eye.

Gravity took care of the rest. Second Story Johnny landed in the gardenia bushes two stories below, a sticky mess of spoiled seed, blood, and broken limbs. By the time he got from the Emergency Room to Dahlonge Gardens, he had made world history. He had broken every limb in his body, his left eye socket, his back, his left jaw, and several fingers that could no longer be used to violate women and spoil his seed by such evil means. He was wrapped from head to toe like an Egyptian mummy and destined to be transported to Milledgeville to serve time for criminal insanity.

## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver did not pity this patient known as Second Story Johnny, but she did pity the orphan child within him that had made such bad decisions. In his captive state, with his body broken and handcuffed to the bed, he moaned softly as the Caregiver said a decade of the Rosary and told him about two great gifts she wanted him to have. He hoped the Soldier of Fortune magazine when the Caregiver mentioned gifts.

He saw her reading the most current issue as she ate her peanut butter and banana sandwich, which he thought quite odd for a young woman to do. He learned more about the gifts she wanted him to have as she spoke softly over his broken body. The first was God's amazing grace through Jesus Christ, and the second was His Mother. She told him how God's Mother, La Virgen de Guadalupe, came to her and heard her when her own Mother María could not. She told him how her Mother María had suffered greatly as an orphan growing up in Cuba with hearing loss.

## Imagine All the People

She told him of her triumphs as her own Mother María made a better life as a public-school teacher after her Father was killed in Vietnam. Finally, she shared with her captive Johnny how angry she still got when she remembered the day her own Mother María died of a broken heart and pulled the trigger years ago. Suicide was such an inhumane death, as there is no humane way to kill anyone.

She told how La Virgen de Guadalupe, Mother of God, would always be there to love, comfort, listen, and correct all of God's children. Far from being a fictional pawn of authoritarian war lords, La Virgen de Guadalupe, Mother of God, was the only hope of humankind. It was not through Zeus' head that Athena sprang, but from her own Mother Metis, whom Zeus killed. Men were not from Mars; men came from Adam and Eve. Mars came from Juno, and Venus came from Dione. The salvation of the world came from a humble woman who committed fully to God, a woman who knew that the birth of children would always be more important than the bloody battles of men.

The young man known as Second Story Johnny let tears flow down his face as this most obnoxious, beautiful, compassionate, and persistent person known as the Caregiver spoke to him in love. He endured the pain of touching his thumb to his index finger to grip the Rosary and moaned as the Caregiver placed a soft kiss on his forehead. The sanitarium transport company picked him up twelve minutes later to endure a ten year sentence in Milledgeville.

The Caregiver went to her wonderful siesta spot in the janitor's closet. Mr. Cecil Johnson was a brilliant man, whose engineering skills came from a life of struggle, hard work, and genius that Black Veterans know well. Mr. Johnson grew up sharecropping peaches, and his Mother and Father endured the evil of legal slavery. Yet they pressed forward and taught all their children that life gets better with each generation.



## Imagine All the People

Mr. Johnson cut a barter deal with the Caregiver. He fashioned a little bed above the rack of industrial mops and brooms in exchange for the Caregiver's labor in the peach orchards he now owned. He learned always to follow his gut instinct when it came to helping people, and never to endanger his own survival as generations of his Ancestors had been forced to do. As a general rule, white women made him nervous with their forward & flirtatious ways. He knew how such things could still get a Black man killed in rural Georgia, and he only had eyes for his childhood sweetheart, now his bride of 46 years, Miss Esther.

Yet the Caregiver's modesty, brokenness, and humility made the red headed freckle faced child one of his best workers and a great help to his Queen Esther. He pitied her and allowed her to sleep on the plywood shelf when need be. She settled herself in the Coleman sleeping bag and drifted into a refreshing slumber that seemed to last a trillion years yet lasted twenty five minutes. Blondie. She heard Blondie's songs break into colors too beautiful to name. Heart of Glass. Rapture. One Way or Another. Blondie. Dagwood Bumstead. The cartoon family from the morning newspaper flowed through her mind superimposed on a map targeting the coastal midpoint of that beautiful country on the West Coast of South America. Lima, Peru. Lima. The shape of Peru's capitol city, Lima, pulsed within her imagination every heartbeat, now superimposed on the scene of someone suffering and supine in the lima bean field between the Happy Haven Trailer Park and Dahlonga Gardens.

## Imagine All the People

Dixie, the Caregiver, jolted awake and jumped with her feet flat on the floor and screamed, “Fire!” Only Mr. Johnson read her mind, as Black people always read minds, hearts, and situations as well as books. He called 911, and calmly followed the child to the lima bean patch where she ran to scoop up a creature soaked in the sugary smell of diabetic attack.

Her FedEx name tag read, “Blondie”, and she could barely open her eyes. The Caregiver pulled an orange from her fanny pack and began to feed each plump plug to this precious person, Blondie. Blondie was dressed in a FedEx uniform with sturdy work boots. Her breasts were tied down with gauze, showing signs of motherhood as milk flowed from her sports bra and the gauze bandages. Her beautiful black hair showed at the roots where the peroxide could not bleach. The Caregiver read her trauma as a familiar sight. Blondie was a person who did not want to identify as a woman to protect herself and her own child. People identified as someone other than their birth identities for various reasons, and trauma should not be one of them. She was working hard and running from someone or something.

The story on Blondie was that she was too scared and proud to tell her host family she had suffered gestational diabetes before she birthed her son, Abram.

She had only been in Georgia a few months from Lima, Peru. She was the only one who wanted to work the rural route and chose to make herself a man to get the contract labor from FedEx. This is how things were back in the day.

Her husband had been killed before Abram was born, and she relied on her Baptist faith and its charity to carry her family to safety. Wars and rumors of wars continued in South America, while God’s economy continued to operate on the kindness of strangers.

She was working hard to deliver packages on an empty stomach and hoped to find some muscadine grapes ripe on the chicken wire fence along side the lima bean patch. What other things that the Caregiver learned in her deep friendship with Blondie she would never tell. Respect individual dignity without living hyper-individuated was key to human health. Blondie reminded the Caregiver always to trust her own intuition, to depend on her neighbors, and be always of service.

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This has been an unofficial 23:59 report from the Universe. Imagine the possibilities when we connect through compassion and mutual guarantee.

#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

## ***Imagine All The People: The Authority of Charity***

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as Florida. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

## Imagine All the People

It is impossible to fail when we imagine the possibilities to solve every problem. Our results may fail every so often, but when we collaborate to improve our methods then we will eliminate failure and deliver best results.

Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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Before Mother ate the body and blood of Christ once and for all, she took a deep breath. It was the most relaxed she had ever been, and the most excited. One thing you must understand about Mother and all people who suffer profoundly is that their travails are but wedding preparations.

Not the wedding preparations where people fight over who can be married or not, who is legally bound to bake a cake or not, how many bride's maids there will be, and what color their gowns will be. Mother, like many orphaned and feral, regarded every trial as a wedding preparation. She, like every believer, knew herself to be the Bride of Christ.

Although she broke Dad's heart by always placing herself at risk, he knew full well when he married her that she was a woman to administrate charity with authority, and authority with charity. He knew full well that Christ was her Master, her first love, the one more tangible to her than her own Father who perished in battle before she was even born.

It wasn't always that way. Dead to this mortal coil in November 2016, she welcomed a terrorist and his incendiary device with open arms and open legs, as told here:

[Alegría: The Health of Nations: The Story of Dixie Pride \(lulu.com\)](https://lulu.com)

Long before there was material psychology or mega-donor schismatic religions, there was the man from Galilee who insisted that women read Scriptures, be treated with dignity, and not be made equal to a toilet by man's ignorant fear of woman's unique ability to turn his seed into a living child.

Long before Father earned Mother's trust and married her in the Cathedral, he had won her heart at that dance in Jacksonville. He adored her upon first sight. From the back she was Black, but from the front she was the very apparition of Freya. As his own Mother with her kinky, blonde curls and her fair, alabaster skin was a trick of light and a treat of womanly shape, so was Mother. Father was the only one who healed her from her nightmares associated with her name. Dixie. Was she a conquered nation to be shoplifted and soiled by cowards called klansmen? Was she a traumatized orphan to be beaten, tortured, and mocked? How had she gymnastically unloaded every coward's gun by welcoming them with open arms and open legs? Mother knew that cowards delight in the pain and screams of women and children. In never fighting the KKK terrorists who advanced upon her with their cowardice, she caused a droop in their cocks that would last for days. Mother knew that cowards want a fight. That is how they assume power and control. When she welcomed them with open arms and open legs, it unloaded their weapon, so to speak. They hated her even more, yet she loved them still, from a safe social distance.

Father gave Mother a new context for the name Dixie, outside of history, present, or future. “Dix” is the word for “Ten” *en français*. Father taught Mother by his actions, not his words that Mother was a perfect ten. Dix. Dixie. His little Angel, Miss Dixie Joy Pride, made perfect in love as Mrs. Sven Olsen, was ***Un Dix Parfait***, a Perfect Ten.

She remembered this when it was time to make it right with the man who nearly killed her, but also helped to raise her. Mother could have left Mr. Stout behind, but she did not. Widowed, unable to walk, and without health insurance, the lame man had laid in his own sick for days before anyone discovered him. He was unable to care for the dilapidated old farmhouse that was falling in on him, much less the acreage, the livestock, and himself. Mother remembered she was a Perfect Ten when she first drove up to her childhood home, which had at once been a hellscape of hyper-nationalism and a treasure of tropical Florida horse country.

Avocado, lime, lemon, orange, tangerine, and pecan trees cascaded their fruits voluptuously in concert with the Spanish moss draped Oak trees that were older than the concept of time itself. Florida with its promise of eternal youth also held the promise of sudden death to all who dared awaken in its sultry bosom. Alas, Mr. Stout had seen almost 90 years, and was too weak to walk when Dixie entered through the front door without a knock. He could not believe his eyes. What was she doing here after all this time? Her flaming red hair cascaded down her back and bosom like the pomegranates and persimmons curling around one another on the South side of the land. Had she come to kill him? She had left so many years ago without a sound, and never returned.

## Imagine All the People

She should kill him, he thought. He cried out her name in pitiful sorrow, with a tone she had never heard. The name that seemed to have been a curse now seemed a new song to this broken man, bent and gnarled in pain. “Oh, Dixie. You’re home.” Perhaps he finally understood. Wherever Dixie was made a house a home. Men define territories and countries by wars and legalism. Women make wherever they roam a home. Dixie was not a conquered nation. Dixie was a Perfect Ten.

With all ten of her fingers laced behind his sweaty neck and knees, she hoisted his frail body up in her arms and carried him to her Ford F—150. She sang sweetly to him, as he cried. He would not blame her if she would kill him. “Way down upon the Suwannee River...” she sang sweetly as he wondered if she was going to shoot him. Flashes of every cruel thing he had done to her pained him. He remembered how hard she fought back, but how loyal and obedient she was in all the house chores. He especially remembered how she expertly organized his workshop with his Snap On tools.

While he had resigned himself to die by her hands, he cried when she laid him gently onto a clean air mattress set up in the camper cab. She washed his forehead gingerly with a cool cloth as she cooed, “Stay still, Sir. We’re going to get you home.”

Home. Where was home? It was no longer the old farmhouse bequeathed to him by his great-grandfather, who built it after the American Civil War. It was no longer the empty bed, devoid of all comfort now that Mrs. Stout was gone. It was no longer the empty table where he sat alone, struggling to eat the Swanson’s TV Dinners that were freezer burned after years of storage.

He never thought he would truly feel in his heart that home was within her own heart. As many times as he had chanted the song “Dixie”, written by an Ohio native to fabricate fiction of a land that really didn’t exist, he had never thought of his own foster daughter, Dixie, as his home. Now she was truly his only home.

As her truck glided smoothly down the highway toward an unknown destination, he cried as he remembered their four years together. Mr. and Mrs. Stout fostered her as parents from the time Dixie was completely orphaned after her Mother shot herself in the salty seas near the Saint Simon Island, Georgia Lighthouse. Dixie, who preferred to be called by her middle name Joy, had already suffered the loss of her Father before she was even born, whose only memories were imprinted in her ability to read shapes and colors. That’s how he spoke to her. That’s the story of most Military children. That’s why numbers and letters confounded her, while shapes and colors lead her right to the exact truth of every situation.

Mr. Stout wondered if Dixie would take him out to the Ocala National Forest to kill him. He prayed she would. He felt something he had never felt before, which was a profound sense of repentance for the constant war he had raged on this insolent child, now a woman, always a warrior.

As she glided through the Ocala National Forest and brought the truck to a smooth halt, he breathed in the perfume of Pine Trees and lush backwoods. At this point, he didn’t know what Dixie was about to do with his dying body, nor did he care. He closed his eyes, and drew in a deep breath, remembering all their battles.



He remembered beating her with a wooden dowel he fashioned in his shop from the thicket of Hickory Trees on the vast land. He remembered shouting for joy when it broke the skin on her legs and backside, then once again when the dowel itself broke half in two after more thrashes.

What a small man he was. Mr. Stout had never grown above four feet 7 inches tall, but he had been almost as wide most of his adult life. No one could make him feel shorter and taller than Dixie. He felt shorter when she would not obey his command to beg for her life. Instead of begging him to stop as he screamed at her to do, she shouted, “Thank you, Sir! May I please have another?” Instead of renouncing her vision of God and adopting his, she counted it all joy when he beat her like this daily. When he advanced on her, hoping to impregnate her and subdue her fiery will, she shocked him and unloaded his weapon.

That’s what a woman does when she welcomes a would-be rapist with open arms and open legs. She unloads his weapon, which he forgot to be a wand of light, a sacred tool of communion with which to create life, love, and joy. After the first time Dixie welcomed his evil advances in this way, he sustained a permanent inability to get to full staff. He beat her harder and felt shorter every day. He beat her every day on general principle. Even when she had obeyed him perfectly within the letter and the spirit of the law, he would beat her for committing the sin of picking everything up with her left hand. Sinister. This word was Latin for “left-handed”, and Mr. Stout nearly crushed her entire nervous system trying to beat her natural proclivity out of her.

Bringing herself to present time, the Caregiver remembered her promise to the National Park Ranger and set about her duties swiftly. After preparing a hammock betwixt the tall Pine Trees, she set Mr. Stout in there gingerly. She nursed him with cold water from her Igloo Thermos, then set out to clean the entire Women's Bathroom. She removed everything from all four shower stalls, toilet stalls, windowsills, and sinks. Then she scrubbed every surface, tile, and toilet with her own supplies. This is what she called Field Stripping a home. With her simple act of service, she had established ownership of a once drab restroom littered with trash and cobwebs. Now she was ready to get to work.

Mr. Stout could hardly believe his eyes. Here was the girl he had nearly killed, naked before him leading him into a warm shower. She held his forearms, walking backwards carefully in flip flops. "If you feel like you're about to fall, just grab my hips. Don't grab my boobs or we'll both fall." He could hardly believe his eyes. She was absolutely beautiful. It was not as though she was giving herself to be viewed as something sexual.

It was that she was giving herself to be as vulnerable as he was in his time of dying. Naked as Babies born into life, they both stepped under the warm water, which soothed him as she scrubbed his scalp and skin. She handled him gingerly and caressed his quaking brain when he cried out. “Oh Dixie!” He screamed as he remembered the scar underneath her right rib cage. He remembered how it got there, after throwing her across the room many times when she was a vulnerable child. She kissed his forehead and worked the dandruff out of his hair as he continued to cry, remembering every time he called for Mrs. Stout to hold her legs down while he beat her into an unconscious state. He punished her for having a high IQ test, which is one reason she hated school. To Dixie’s simple country mind, IQ tests were like prison. They were a way to separate people from the general population. Like guns, they were a wonderful way to sterilize women considered too intelligent to do a lowly thing such as birthing a child. The only IQ test that mattered is could a person distinguish between good and evil.

Until this point, Dixie had been unable to conceive. She had never contracepted and had lived a long-time past walking through the broad gates of Atlanta. Where most women happily took pills to prevent that most precious gift of life, Dixie saw from her days on the farm that there could be no other reason to lay with a man except for life. It seemed men now a days with the modern conveniences of pills, sponges, and death on demand had forgotten what their Fathers knew. Low is the man who cannot lengthen his gestation period. A man’s gestation period could never equal a woman’s at 9 months, but it could certainly be longer than 90 seconds.

## Imagine All the People

Low is the man who is angry at a woman for conceiving life. Low is the man who mistakes a woman for a glory hole. Womankind only lowers herself in her desire to equal him. Sick is the nation whose children handle lead without realizing its poisonous effects. Dixie had learned guns well, if not for the therapeutic value of shooting them at safe targets, then for the terror of keeping them away from her own head.

It seemed the Second Amendment had become the walking middle finger of the Bill of Rights. Was America the envy of the world because of its rule of law? Or was it the envy of the world because of its material excess? America was not a loud thing to Dixie, because its constant wars for constant peace rendered her an orphan. Just as Dixie was an imaginary nation within a nation, so was America an imaginary land within the Americas. Men draw national borders by wars, treaties, and laws. Women create nations from their wombs and hearts. Just as no building can legally stand higher than the Capitol Dome, so can no nation stand higher than its own Mothers.

So it was that Dixie had come a long way since beating the living daylights out of any man who had been in her bed when her menses arrived. His only purpose in life was to impregnate her. This had been her evil thought in days of yore. She married my Father, speaking to him openly about this trouble in her mind. He knew she may never be able to conceive given her travails, but Sven married her happily.

Mr. Stout breathed deeply after letting his tears flow underneath the warm shower head. Dixie rubbed Johnson's Baby Oil into his skin, patting his skin dry with the soft, fluffy towel. It was the best shower he had ever had. She spritzed some Old Spice on him, wrapped him in a terry cloth robe exactly like hers, and scooped him up in her arms.

## Imagine All the People

She dried his hair and dressed him in an orange, white, and green sweat suit. He had never seen the colors together. He had never considered the words. Where was this place? Who was this Team? Florida A&M Rattlers, his shirt and pants read.

He collapsed in fatigue as Dixie prepared the fire. She sang James Taylor songs. She told him the story of when she ran away to Georgia from Florabelle many moons ago and worked in a nursing home in Dahlonaga. She fed him some pinto beans and corn bread heated on the Coleman stove. He relaxed and let his mind wander into her fecund imagination. The story went just as he had imagined her going so many moons ago.

She had gained access to the nursing home, as only she could do, with her excellent manners and distinctive style. She wasn't old enough to be a Nurse, nor educated enough to be a Nurse Assistant, but she was young and energetic enough to be an awesome Caregiver.

People in nursing homes don't care where a person comes from; they are just happy someone is there. Dahlonaga Gardens is where she earned her sobriquet, the Caregiver. She never said no to extra shifts. She worked for days on end. She slept in the broom closet, embarrassed for anyone to discover that she was a homeless run-away foster child. She was always cheerful. Yet she usually had her head in the clouds, thanks to lack of sleep and the inevitable impact of so many brain injuries.

## Imagine All the People

One day, she was deep in thought as she gazed at the World Map at the opposite end of the long corridor. She stared at an archipelago way down yonder from her point of native reference, Florida. What was it called, she wondered as she walked closer to the map. South Sandwich Island. Now she did something only she would do, which is to walk even faster and with more purpose, staring straight up at the skies visible through the skylights in the ceiling. It was a beautifully cloudy day, and she wondered what people argued about in South Sandwich Island. Were they angry that they were stereotyped on the world stage as only eating sandwiches? Who got the best sandwiches? Did they also eat burritos and waffles? Who preferred peanut butter and mayonnaise sandwiches to tuna salad sandwiches? What was the ethnic breakdown of sandwich control? Were people imprisoned for preferring peanut butter and banana sandwiches over roast beef sandwiches? Where did a Philly Cheese Steak fit into South Sandwich Island's economy?

As her brain permuted the plethora of possibilities in South Sandwich Island, her body crashed into a metal sandwich cart, sending what seemed like a trillion plastic plates all over the once immaculate hallway. People screamed in horror. She could hardly believe her foolishness. She expected to be beaten, just as Mr. Stout expected to be beaten as a child. Just as he taught her to expect to be beaten. Yet God has another plan every day. Amazing grace. Amazing grace rang out from Miss Oletha, the Dietary Manager, who thundered, "Praise God! You found my watch!"

Watch? How had she found her Boss's watch? Such a device was arcane to the Caregiver. She had never owned a watch, let alone cared to look at one. Time eluded her long ago, and she only knew that whatever time it was, God was always on time. She escaped the cruel stereotype that Germans were always punctual, since she herself rarely was on man's time. Not only was she terrified to leave the house, but she was also always happy to be interrupted by the natural rhythms of life, which meant that she would always stop and talk to Samuel the Street Preacher on the way to work. He always had Boiled Peanuts for sale, which she bought to help his ministry. She would always stop and pick up someone's groceries when she saw them fall down on the sidewalk. She knew that no one was born on time, nor broke a hip on time, nor died on time. These things all happened in God's time.

Miss Oletha was quite punctual, as she had been for ten years at Dahlonga Gardens. Today was her last day, since she had her husband just purchased a landscape business and won a contract at University of North Georgia, which was the Military College of Georgia. Miss Oletha intended to landscape it towards the future, whilst pruning its past.

Miss Oletha was in a quandary since she misplaced her watch earlier that morning. It was a simple Timex watch, but it was bequeathed to her by Grand Selathea. Grand Selathea was her maternal great Grandmother, who prized that Timex watch she purchased at Montgomery Ward. Miss Oletha remembered her words exactly, "She who is on top of time is on top of everything." Dixie cleaned up the plates and the mess from her collision, while Miss Oletha soothed the child's humiliation over such a mishap. Miss Oletha felt compassion for the child, who had rarely been on top of anything except a list of at-risk children.

## Imagine All the People

Apparently, the prized Timex watch had been placed on one of the lunch trays when she removed it to wash her hands. It might have been scraped into the trash unless the Caregiver crashed into the dirty dishes cart. She sent its contents into orbit. Scores of partially eaten tuna salad, egg salad, and peanut butter with honey sandwiches flew everywhere. With bread and its contents akimbo, the Caregiver hurried to pick up the cart and clean up her mess. The Caregiver used this opportunity to serve Miss Oletha and the entire Dietary Department by deep cleaning the cart.

Mr. Stout laughed, and relieved himself from a lifetime of hatred, shame, and pain. How could this child come back to him? How could she love him so? He had been so cruel to her, at least that's what he remembered. Yet she remembered something so much more important. Dixie remembered that he had clothed her and housed her. She remembered that his cruelty was only his expression of weakness. She remembered that like her and all people, he didn't even know what he was doing was wrong when he was doing something so wrong.

Here is a deeper meaning of forgiveness. As Christ on the cross begged God for mercy on people who persecuted him because they knew not what they did, so did the Caregiver know that Mr. Stout knew not what he did. At the time a person is committing evil, they don't even know the difference between good and evil.



Ten hours passed from night into day, with Mr. Stout sleeping deeply within the hammock. He felt super cozy within the FAMU Rattlers sweatshirt Dixie brought him from the Tampa Classic. He released himself from the worry of letting the land go for back taxes. He released himself from being a third generation Grand Dragon of the KKK. He released himself from the hatred of how Dixie welcomed him with open arms and open legs years ago every time he tried to rape her. Her courage caused permanent erectile dysfunction in him. He hated her for that, which is the only way she knew to love a man. If she wanted a man, she fought him. This was hard for Dad to get used to, since he was a true Knight in Shining Armour. If she didn't want a man, she would welcome him with open arms and open legs.

Every rapist is a coward who delights in the screams of his victim and wants a fight. Mr. Stout screamed in agony when he realized how many foster children whose innocence he had stolen, as his was stolen. He didn't need to say a word. Dixie held his hand and washed his forehead with a clean, cool cloth. She sang Old Man River as she rocked him in the hammock gingerly.

Her authority was her charity, just as her charity was her authority. Right then and there a powerful alchemy occurred that bonded them deeper than if she was begat of his own loins. Right then and there in the Ocala National Forest Mr. Stout and the Caregiver became Old War Buddies.

## Imagine All the People

When he died three days later, and I was born ten months later, there was no question about why she named me Charity. Everything that had blocked her blessings had been released by the “Open Sesame” of forgiveness. Forgiveness is not some high and mighty thing, but a humble, objective realization that some people don’t know the difference between good and evil. God can have anyone at His table except the one who has not forgiven. People may still have to pay for their crime with their flesh, but their spirits could be freed.

Mr. Stout had called her a race mixing whore, amongst other things. She had believed that for a long time. Yet safe within the marriage bed after he died, a beautiful thing happened. Me. Life. Charity. I am the product of over 9 nations, from Ghana, Sweden, Germany, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Scotland, Ireland, and Italy. Dixie, the Caregiver, Dixie Joy Pride, Alegría, Leggy, Mrs. Sven Olsen, earned the most sacred name in any language. Mother. She earned it not just in birthing me, but in mothering herself and those around her.

She gave her life just before Hillary was elected as the story was told here:

[Alegría: The Health of Nations: The Story of Dixie Pride \(lulu.com\)](#)

Hillary might not have been elected to the White House when Mother died, but just as God’s elect were chosen before the foundations of the Earth were set, so were women all elected to inspire man from his bloody battles towards a culture of life.

## Imagine All the People

Mother paid the back taxes on that farmland in Florabelle, Florida when Mr. Stout died. It is now part of Florida A&M's Agricultural Sciences program. She knew it was not enough to repent of sin and regret the wrongdoing associated with terrorism. She had to make it right.

That's why I am here today to tell this story. That's the authority of charity. I am Charity, thanks to my fiery Mother and Father who loved her.

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This has been an unofficial 23:59 report from the Universe. Imagine the possibilities when we connect through compassion and mutual guarantee.

#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

## *Imagine All The People: An Act of Congress*

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as the Florida Georgia line. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

It is impossible to fail when we imagine the possibilities to solve every problem. Our results may fail every so often, but when we collaborate to improve our methods then we will eliminate failure and deliver best results.

## Imagine All the People

Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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The sway of the seats and the funk of the Greyhound bus lulled the Caregiver to sleep quick fast in a hurry. She loved the delicious smell of hand packed picnic baskets all around her. She loved being a so-called white girl named Dixie Joy Pride sitting on the back seat of the bus. Dick Gregory spoke the truth; the back of the bus is the safest position. The Caregiver was happy to take it and stretched out on the only seat that had no passengers on either side of her.

The smell of homemade fried chicken, yam pie, and collard greens mingled with the stale odor of second-hand smoke from various brands she could easily recognize. Virginia Slims, Camels, Bel Air, Marlboro, and Doral brands all mingled in her olfactory senses. She sat herself straight up, rebooted her diaphragm and claimed her Qi energy with a solid “HA!”, blew her nose of the stale odors, sanitized her hands, and stretched out fully refreshed.

Like many NFL players who endured more traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) than adulation from adoring fans, Mother Garnett knew the child was completely in her right mind, which made her mind seem not to be right at all. The Caregiver had purposely taken every blow to her young brain on the left side of the head, causing her to be in a dream like state at all times. Mother Garnett remarked with anger that many foster parents failed to understand that spare the rod, spoil the child didn't mean knocking a child unconscious with a baseball bat. Mother Garnett was angry that many adults had forgotten not to provoke children to wrath. One of the Caregiver and Mother Garnett's shared dreams was for America not to be #1 for TBIs and the unhealthiest country on Planet Earth. They were all for the sport, but they were angry that Black men especially and most poor men in general had little access to the monetary economy except as paid gladiators. It seemed the wholesome nature of the entire sport had been replaced by seedy people looking to exploit these men. It seemed that there were few people who stood by these men when their bodies aged past being able to endure the sport. Mother Garnett knew it would change for the better in God's time, which was measured by the generations. Mother Garnett encouraged the Caregiver not to be so worried and angry over such things, but to surrender to God.

Miss Mabel, better known as First Lady Garnett, knew the Caregiver better than to tell her what to do. Miss Mabel, whom the Caregiver was privileged to call "Mother Garnett" in the AME tradition, communicated silently to the child. Mother Garnett showed her the symbol to find her Guardians at the crowded Greyhound bus station, as a teacher shows students flash cards. She knew how to read the child's mind, as all Black intelligence knows how to read people and situations as adeptly as books.

## Imagine All the People

The symbol Mother Garnett showed the Caregiver was the same symbol the child held dear from her own deceased Daddy's days long before she was born. This symbol was from a war the world had forgotten, the one before Vietnam. Korea. That precious peninsula was more contested than the Caregiver's own native state, Florida.

That war that divided North and South, as all wars do. These wars were the road to hell, as wars that divided the East from West were avenues to its deepest inferno. The symbol was a seahorse encased inside a beautiful shape she didn't know the name of, with a caption underneath that read, "HS-1". Amongst the hot struggles of the poor, the smell of hope was a mélange of soap donated by the local Salvation Army for the dignity of daily showers that would be missed on what would be a weeklong bus ride for many passengers. She climbed aboard behind them all.

The man she had known earlier in life as Soldier Neighbor Sir was Antoine L'Argent. His new bride was General Suzette L'Ouverture, who had known him since they were school children. She matched the HS-1 Seahorse shape to the one on his ball cap and recognized him instantly. She recognized his beautiful wife instantly too. What a striking couple they made. They welcomed her with arms wide open, as they prepared for a long journey across the country.

## Imagine All the People

Many years before, Antoine had been almost incapable of making it through a day without an excess of whiskey, homegrown dirt weed, and various weapons. He had almost lost the ability to use his own brain as his best weapon. Most of those weapons had now been made illegal since he smuggled them home from Vietnam. Thank God, he had turned them over to Miss Suzette so she could give him some grace and get rid of them legally. Many Veterans had not been so blessed. Many Veterans had made wrong judgments with their weapons, preferring these inanimate objects to living people. Many Veterans had been seduced by the love of power weapons seem to bring, instead of the power of love a good woman gives. For it is written, “[It is not good for a man to be alone.](#)” Such remains God’s eternal wisdom on social isolation.

She listened to Lieutenant L’Argent speak sweet nothings to his bride, General L’Ouverture, or Miss Suzette as she preferred. She was pleasantly happy to hear their marital coos. She felt the warm glow all people, especially children, feel when hearing the gentle love between parents. It was the same warm feeling people only get from other people when they recognize their need for one another. It was the same warm feeling people get from a homecooked meal shared at a well-appointed table, and from enjoying the natural rhythms of life. She was so happy Miss Suzette had written Antoine letters over the years before she retired from the Marines.



## Imagine All the People

Miss Suzette stood at six feet tall, with a regal beauty that was arresting. Her broad square shoulders belied an inner strength that knew no boundaries. This is one thing that inspired her to become a Marine. The hurt she knew as a child mocked for her beautiful obsidian skin and her strong build was overcome by joy. She had that joy, joy, joy, joy down in her heart. She had joy to know that those who bullied her only envied her true freedom. Her true freedom was embracing her talents, sharing her talents, and knowing that nothing from the outside could harm her. Miss Suzette was a warrior in the spiritual sense. Miss Suzette knew that once conflict had reduced to violence and bloodshed, there were only losers. Miss Suzette knew that more women in the Marines meant fewer wars fought with guns and more connections made with people.

Miss Suzette was raised in the same Louisiana Parish as Antoine. She used to defend him at the schoolyard when he was picked on for having a name more peculiar to Black men. She defended him for his Catholic genuflect and prayer before his free school lunch, although she had been a Baptist before they engaged. This endeared her to him, but it also made him pluck up and protect her too. Miss Suzette had become even more protective of Antoine, albeit remotely when he came home from Vietnam.

## Imagine All the People

In that era, Antoine always said it took an act of congress to get anything done for Veterans. The Caregiver didn't quite know what he meant. In exasperation he remarked daily, "Getting anything from the VA takes an act of congress." Nothing seemed more exasperating to her than listening to stale dogmas during these "acts of congress" she viewed on NBC Nightly News. It was obvious to her that no one believed them, but they parroted such dogmas to win re-election. It seemed to her that Miss Suzette could get more done in one day with her love of Antoine than these men could in many decades of their burgeoning bureaucracy. Yet she loved them still. They were men who had forgotten what an act of congress truly was.

In the aperture of her imagination, she remembered the theology debates she had with Grammy and Poppy. They taught her the Song of Solomon. They taught her the Kama Sutra. Ananga Ranga. All these sacred texts explained survival, sex, and what happens when man forgets the importance of an act of congress. Womankind. They taught her the just governance of sex leads to the health of nations, not to the exclusion of others nor pious puritanical hypocrisy. They explained that instead of hollering about the hippies as she did in her righteous anger, they lived joyfully in clean living. They taught her to love everyone, even the hippies who spit on Vietnam Veterans like Antoine. She wasn't quite there yet, but she powered through the pain.

An act of congress. Wasn't that how Adam and Eve got banished from the Garden of Eden? Wasn't that how Eve bore Cain who killed Abel? Families thought to be dysfunctional today forgot that the first family was this way too, all from an act of congress.

Wasn't it an act of congress that caused Eve to birth Seth? Were not these acts of congress more dangerous to women's health than men's health? Were not these acts of congress to be governed for the health of nations? Wasn't it an act of congress that brought her into this world? The Caregiver had little respect for man's acts of congress in their silly little governments. Their blame games. Their XXX pornography shops on the side of Highway 441. Their arrests of Mothers who nursed their Babes in plain sight, as though the ability to produce food was criminal. As a baby fits snugly inside its Mother's womb, so does all temporal governance with its acts of congress fit within the infinite force of love.

Antoine was small in stature, yet great in intellect. The product of Acadian parents, he had made it to Louisiana where he was raised in an orphanage after his folks died from scarlet fever when he was not yet five years young. Suzette was his first friend at school, where others bullied him for being small for his age. He was still small for his age 50 years later, yet as a wise woman knows about men, the features that seem to make smaller men vulnerable to hyper-egoistic men truly make them strong. Miss Suzette knew this from her complete survey of American history.

There is a love strength has for weakness, and weakness has for strength. Between these two complimentary forces the powerful alchemy of love is forged. The Caregiver drifted off into a dream where she played match maker to them years before.

Long before love was legal in Florida, it was celebrated in the Military. The Caregiver would never understand how people were more comfortable with war than love, yet she did understand these two forces were equal and opposite. Yet she sought no cure for romanticism. The romantic truth that love always wins is not a disease to be cured. It is a victory to be celebrated. It was for that reason that she doted on Antoine without making him feel doted on. In fact, he hardly knew she was there most days since the first time she unloaded his firearm many moons ago.

The best way to unload a weapon is to tell the truth. Identify the weapon. What is this thing? What is its nature? How can I separate it from its ability to harm me and others? These were the questions every warrior processes. These were the questions the Caregiver asked herself constantly.

The Caregiver had brought in the mail from the lock box at the front of the trailer park to Antoine's now tidy single wide for nine months. She rode her Schwinn ten speed extra fast when a letter marked "APO FPO" arrived. She knew it was from Miss Suzette, and she knew it would pluck Antoine up.

Antoine was a very handsome man, although he did not feel it most days. Years of being reminded that he was short and small had whittled his confidence down. The memory that he survived, and his comrades died in battle sent him into the bowels of depression. Like many men in the Disco Era, Antoine bought several pairs of platform shoes to wear with his bell bottoms. He fancied that it made him look taller, as the Caregiver fancied that mascara made her eyelashes look lacey.

## Imagine All the People

She noticed that these shoes made him feel less secure, as she noticed her mascara did the same. It made her look like a silly raccoon in the sultry Florida heat when it melted down her freckled face. It was an eminence front. Why didn't her love make Antoine feel ten feet tall? Who told him he was less of a man because of his height? Why couldn't he realize that she needed him to be there with her, instead of at the disco? She prayed and prayed he would stop going there, as he always smelled of stale cigarette smoke and booze when he came home.

This beautiful September day of which the Caregiver dreamed was the one where Miss Suzette was going to make a surprise visit. Earth Wind & Fire's "September" played on the eight-track tape system in Antoine's trailer. The Caregiver walked in to check on him after school, only to find him passed out on the couch in his red platform shoes, paisley polyester bell bottoms, white pirate shirt, and the stench of a hangover.

She turned his hi-fi to maximum speed, jolting him awake. His .38 fell from the couch cushions, which infuriated the Caregiver. She could not stand unclean protocol. Unsecured weapons were filth. Unsecured weapons were the worst unclean protocol.

Antoine read her look and jolted up to turn off the stereo. The Caregiver put her little hands on her hips and squared her jaw, prepared for a fight. He then picked up his .38, shoved it in his pants, and spit at her, "Real men don't fight wars with popsicles, you little brat!" She held him in her gaze until he fell over on the couch again, his gun inevitably sliding down the insides of his polyester bell bottom pants.

Instead of arguing with him, explaining that Sheriff & Mrs. Cornwall were hosting him for supper, and containing her excitement that Miss Suzette's attendance at said supper was a big surprise, the Caregiver took decisive action.

She gallantly strode to the back porch of their home, which was a welcome haven since she left the Stout farm. She was happy to be in their foster home and kept their double wide trailer immaculate as an exchange of gratitude. She had trained grape tomato plants, green beans, and summer squash to climb up their chain link fence. She learned to make herself of value, thus endearing herself to them as a foster daughter whom they adamantly called daughter. She loved them so much.

She had just field stripped their Kenmore chest freezer, which Momma Cornwall appreciated very much. Poppa Cornwall appreciated it too, but he thought a young girl should be out playing more instead of cleaning all the time. He observed that the Caregiver was just too serious for her age, but he loved her just the same. He was a Vietnam Veteran too, and as Sheriff of Mulberry County had seen this behavior in foster children all too often. Momma and Poppa Cornwall were thrilled to get Antoine and Miss Suzette together for a surprise supper. It was the only favor the Caregiver had asked since she had been there, which they both found dear. She was a welcome sight with all their own birth children grown and moved far away from central Florida.

The Caregiver retrieved the 48-variety pack of Fla-Vor-Ice she purchased from Publix just last week. Their colors of red, orange, green, yellow, and blue danced in her imagination as she advanced her protocol.

She always made sure to keep some money to spend, save, and share with her babysitting earnings. Investment income was one thing, but to live within her means on her own wages was another. It was better to keep her money hid in investment portfolios, although a person should not hoard their money. Who would think a foster child had anything? It was better that way. She hated it when people in the big city ingratiated themselves to her because she had inherited land, labor, and capital beyond most people's imagination. Yet it was in most ways a burden to her, because money couldn't buy her parents back to life. It was foolish to flash and flaunt money. Thrift was the better way. She knew just what to do with these frozen treats she had left untouched from her thrifty cache in the immaculate freezer's corner.

As Antoine slumbered on the couch unaware, his freshly trimmed red hair tousled from a night at the disco, his feet akimbo between the couch and coffee table, the Caregiver approached him as though she was invisible.

Swiftly she reached up the inside right leg of his paisley polyester bell bottoms, grabbed the .38, released the barrel, divested it of its ammunition, and began her full-frontal assault with the Fla-Vor-Ice popsicles. The Caregiver had fully weaponized herself from a tender age and was far more resourceful than most people ever thought an adolescent girl could or should be. Her greatest gift was being underestimated or ignored altogether. She learned early on that everything was a resource, and anything could be weaponized.

She shoved the first sleeve of eight Fla-Vor-Ice popsicles down the front of Antoine's pants. She shoved another sleeve of the icy, plastic encased treats down his backside. Then she wrapped the other four sleeves around his head, his chest, and his legs as he screamed in agony. She engineered her body on his to place her full weight on all six of the popsicle sleeves as she hollered, mimicking his exact tone, "Real men don't fight wars with popsicles, you little brat! Real men don't fight wars with popsicles, you little brat! Real men don't fight wars with popsicles, you little brat!"

The shock and awe hit Antoine so hard with that force equal and opposite to his that he could not be angry at the Caregiver. He knew better. She finally relented and ordered, "Supper is in two hours at 18:00. Hit the latrine, Lieutenant L'Argent." He was too numb from the Fla-Vor-Ice to be angry and started laughing hysterically as he climbed in the shower.

When he saw Miss Suzette sitting on the Cornwall's sofa, his heart fluttered. She smelled of fresh gardenias, with a gardenia tucked behind her left ear, her beautiful black skin flattered by her gardenia white sundress, and her ankles crossed in rhinestone studded gardenia white sling back high heels. What a gorgeous sight for his sore eyes. He loved her for being so fearless, and he worshipped her for wearing heels as high as she liked. Most men were insecure at her height and wanted to dwarf her. Antoine wanted to uplift her and enjoy her confident statuesque beauty. Queen. She was his Queen. He would do anything and everything to become her King.



## Imagine All the People

Her demure feminine smile was the pure sunshine that removed the dark shadows from his heart. He loved her more today than he had loved her at first sight many years before. He was grateful that the Caregiver conquered him with her Fla-Vor-Ice popsicles, so that the love between him and this amazing woman could conquer all forces that seem greater.

Thus began a long courtship across many miles. As the Greyhound hummed along the highway, the Caregiver held the gentle murmurings between Antoine and Miss Suzette close to her heart. Most passengers had settled themselves into sleep as they rode through the night. Antoine and Miss Suzette had walked a country mile to be together as husband and wife. He had learned the same thing she always knew; never underestimate a red head. He had learned something new every day from his bride, General Suzette L'Ouverture. She was a most magnificent woman who was only impressed by simple things. She was his Queen, and he was so proud to be her King.

No one in the world could ever understand Antoine like Miss Suzette could. Miss Suzette, who didn't care to be called General L'Overture except in overt Military matters, knew that no one ever truly got over trauma. She knew that with love they could power through the pain. She knew that for every force there is an equal and opposite force. The only force that is not equal to any other is love. Love is always the dominant force, even when people believe it's war. Love always wins.

## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver held her popsicle war dream close to her heart as the bus chugged along at the break of dawn. It stopped somewhere North of Valdosta past the Florida-Georgia line in the morning light. People in the front rows stayed on board, while people in the back of the bus stood up and stretched their bones. Those in the middle rushed along to make their transfer or enjoy southern Georgia as their destination. She made her way to the bodega inside the Greyhound station, where she found some homemade peach popsicles. She handed one to each of the newlyweds and smiled demurely to Antoine.

Real men don't fight wars with popsicles. Real people win love with popsicles.

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This has been an unofficial 23:59 report from the Universe. Imagine the possibilities when we connect through compassion and mutual guarantee.

#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

## ***Imagine All The People: Apples to Oranges***

The following is one report of one day's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as central Florida. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination, and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

It is impossible to fail when we imagine the possibilities to solve every problem. Our results may fail every so often, but when we collaborate to improve our methods then we will eliminate failure and deliver best results.

## Imagine All the People

Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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The Caregiver sashayed along the cobblestoned streets of Dreamville, the same town where she was born many moons ago.

She followed the same route Mother María had long ago when she escaped Cuba to live in the Methodist Children's Home. The air was pregnant with the scent of orange blossoms, honeysuckle, jasmine, and magnolias.

The Caregiver imagined what was in her beautiful Mum's heart when it happened. Dreamville was a town situated on Florida land that produced a lot of oranges, and a few bad apples.

Just as every new girl in town attracts a lot of attention, so did young María attract attention with her sworthy good looks, solemn demeanor, and striking figure. Yet instead of treating her with respect peculiar to men of good morals, she was bullied for the box around her neck.

## Imagine All the People

Unenlightened young man from “old money” bullied her for this strange invention called a hearing aid. Between old money and new money was an ignored concept drawn out in greater detail than dietary law in Scripture: eternal values. Money could not be young or old, because it could not be birthed nor could it die. It could only be a medium of exchange and a store of value. It would not be able to hug someone around the neck in the twilight of life, nor would money animate itself to bring the awe of a Florida sunset’s crepuscularity. Money was an inanimate object that was a tool for trade. People were priceless creatures whose behavior was worthless when they valued money more than other people. People who need people were the luckiest people in the world, as Barbara Streisand crooned so sweetly. Hard work could increase your chances of good fortune, but its yield was a dead thing without the worker’s recognition of his need for other people.

Bullies. Bullies are scared people inside of scary people, as Michelle Obama observed. Like some bad apples, these young men fancied themselves superior and Mother inferior, as they considered that this Florida land belonged to them and Mother belonged in the Catholic orphanage in Cuba from whence she came. They did not know what the Caregiver knew, which she had learned from Mother. Our land is Our Lady.

Just as unenlightened men take from women without thought for her own health, and substitute commitment for consent in matters of intimacy, so do men believe their countries are drawn by wars, maps, and legalism. The Caregiver knew better than that. So did Mother. The temporal governance of unenlightened men was to eternal governance of God as apples to oranges. Just as every tree is rooted in earthly soil, so are all temporal governments rooted in the womb of La Virgen de Guadalupe. The Caregiver was glad to correct these unenlightened men, who were so impressed with their flags, bloody revolutions, and arcane meetings that they forgot the Mother of God who birthed the God they claimed as their own. As ever, when she saw red, she was reminded of the dominant color on La Virgen de Guadalupe. Red did not mean danger, but like the green and gold on her coverings, red meant life. She walked straight toward Our Lady's red, gold, and green as every Karma Chameleon does. Temporal danger did not phase the Caregiver.

So it was on this day that the Caregiver remarked how she loved heat and humidity, but she hated air conditioning. The Caregiver preferred life al fresco, with no artificial interruptions in the natural flow of life. When she arrived at Miss Mabel's house, she heard the usual salutation, "Miss Dixie Joy Pride! What have we here?!" The Caregiver blushed at hearing the infinitive of her birth name, yet walked willingly into the loving embrace of Dreamville's most trusted Midwife, Mrs. Mabel Oletha Garnett.

## Imagine All the People

Miss Mabel's acreage was on the outskirts of town, a mansion compared to the trailer parks which dotted the Florida orange groves throughout Alma County. Florida's fountain of youth was not found by Juan Ponce de Leon, but by the many caring people who treasured the expertise of Miss Mabel. She delivered thousands of Babies without question and often without monetary reward, which is truly the way to build a resource economy.

"Little One, how did you strike this deal?" Miss Mabel was referring to the one-ton truck with its trailer in tow making its way up the driveway after her. The Caregiver, grateful that Miss Mabel used her favorite sobriquet instead of her birth name, smiled with delight. It was so nice to hear affection instead of the stinging reminder of being named after a conquered nation. Dixie. Joy. Joy was something she felt when she thought of Momma and Daddy being together forever somewhere in the vast Heavens. Unlike Charley Pride who died 12 December 2020 of Covid-19 after surviving Military service, Jim Crow Mississippi, and years of live performance, her Daddy, a different Charlie Pride altogether, died in Vietnam before she was born. The story is told [here](#), where Momma died of a broken heart and used Daddy's gun to join him. The Caregiver hoped Albert Einstein was exactly correct. Matter can neither be created nor destroyed. Perhaps it's all just changing forms. Ashes to ashes and dust to dust.

The Caregiver answered Miss Mabel's question thoughtfully as she introduced the Gentlemen driving the trucks. "Miss Mabel, please meet Juan, Alberto, Rudolfo, and Jesús. They brought these apples here from Washington State, since they can't sell them to grocers." Miss Mabel curtsied politely, which was a much more civilized greeting than a handshake. The Gentlemen bowed politely in response after removing their ball caps. They were exhausted from the hot struggles of bringing farm to market, yet they were refreshed by the warm welcome.

Miss Mabel pulled a large wad of cash from her apron and counted it out to Juan. He was very relieved. He had brought the apples from his small plot of land in the Yakima Valley in good faith, but had been turned away from the green grocer. The green grocer agreed to pay Juan's very reasonable price per pound, but he refused once he saw the girth of the apples. The huge fruits had swollen to thrice their normal size from soil impregnated with ashes from Mount Saint Helen's eruption a few months ago. Hence, one apple weighed too much to fetch the normal per pound price. It was such that the Caregiver, never satisfied to allow satellites hovering high above the Earth to perform all the surveillance, followed the news of the green grocer's broken word from the parking lot where the deal was broken to the Spanish Moss draped Oak trees where the men conversed in Spanish at their next move. She approached them carefully and respectfully, her flame red hair startling them as her amulet of La Virgen de Guadalupe made them feel right at home.



## Imagine All the People

They recognized right away that she was not like other American people. She did not spit loud talk of money through her gnashed teeth while insulting them as most Americans did. She approached them with a simple gesture, “Would y’all like some oranges?” Miss Mabel knew now never to place cash in the child’s hands. So often done to her by people seeking sick favors or perverse people praying to replace quantity time with paper money, the poignant condition of the Caregiver was to remain ever a child in terms of money. Money was not evil; the love of it was evil. People were not evil; their hatred of one another was evil. What was good and better was to barter with available resources, which this child did with great aplomb.

Suddenly the men did not feel like they were from Mexico in Florida, nor strangers in a strange land. It was not that they had gone back to the garden, as Joanie Mitchell sang so sweetly. It was that they had moved forward to the finest farmland with a little help from their new friends. They didn’t notice the color of their skin nor what had seemed like strange orange speckles on the Caregiver’s skin, nor her flaming red hair. They didn’t notice Miss Mabel’s beautiful tawny complexion. They noticed the rainbow of fruits and vegetables set out before them on the picnic table. What would have been a wasted trip across the entire land was now made whole with baskets and bowls full of oven fried chicken, cornbread, pinto beans, crooked neck squash, redskin mashed garlic potatoes, sliced beefsteak tomatoes, watermelon, and mulberry cobbler. They didn’t concern themselves with any perceived language barrier from Spanish to English. Their common tongue was the palette of providence from this divine garden.

## Imagine All the People

Fat as a pheasant and languorous as a lima bean bush, the Caregiver took her position in the bed of Juan's truck and strapped herself down between the wheel wells with her very own stainless steel ratchet strap. Technically she was breaking the letter of the law by riding in the bed of the truck, yet she obeyed its spirit. Having a young white girl with flaming curly locks in the cab of the truck would only bring danger to Juan, Alberto, Rudolfo, and Jesús. As the Caregiver had often remarked since her Daddy was killed in war before she was even born, America was far more comfortable with war than love. They could not understand the world on any other terms. Yet.

Snugged up between the bushels of oranges and her own stash of the giant apples from Washington State, the Caregiver wondered who she would meet to escort her to the magic apples in Washington State. Father Garnett had given her a generous gift in these magic apples, swollen with the same force that had sadly killed people a few seasons earlier. He had given her very specific instructions, without ever saying a word. Old School Military Men understood the disobedient nature of womankind quite well, and never expected them to obey spoken or written words. They understood even better that without Eve's maddening, challenging nature, nothing would exist. Adam felt that men might be, and men are that they might have joy, as Prophet Joseph Smith remembered. Father Garnett held up symbols and signs, making stern and sweet facial gestures as he revealed his intended travel protocol to keep her safe. He was fully aware that she had sustained more concussions and God only knows what else in her young life, yet he did not think she was crazy and stupid as many arrogant people did. He just know that she would get off at the destination shown to her on the gown of La Virgen de Guadalupe. Father Garnett knew why the Caregiver stopped on the street corners in awe at the colors of the stop light, unafraid of passersby. The Caregiver was known to sit down on the small patches of withered grass littered with beer cans, cigarette butts, and shards of glass anywhere in Dreamville just to pray the Rosary at the corner before crossing the street when the picture cycled through red, yellow, and white. She would sit there and pray for many cycles of the crossing light, and waited for the appropriate sign, "Walk". She didn't know she was at the street corner as much as she was in the presence of God and His Mother. Like many orphans, she loved to attend Mass. She loved to hear more about God who came from a beautiful woman, Mother of God, to love and save orphans and whores just like her. She saw the red, gold, and green of Mother Mary, not the automated inanimate thing that directed the angry, smelly, loud traffic. Red. Gold. And. Green.

## Imagine All the People

Like Boy George's Karma Chameleon, loving would be easy if everyone's colors were like her dreams. Red, gold, and green.

Staring at the clouds that happily developed to make a canopy over the mulberry bushes, the Caregiver remembered Father and First Lady Garnett's instructions. Only on the farm could she call them Mommy and Daddy, as many a foster child knew. It was only a generation after the Jim Crow laws were banished in Florida, so it was best to employ formalities to protect everyone's identities. Pastor and Mrs. Garnett was not accurate in the African Methodist Episcopal tradition. Father and First Lady Garnett is how her de-facto foster parents were known in Dreamville.

She reviewed Father Garnett's instructions as the aperture of her imagination opened in ecstatic visions. In the same instance, the sun pierced through the heavy clouds, vetoing her shade. She held the patch above her face, supine and snug against the cold metal of the truck's bed. "HS-1" it read, beneath an exquisite shape she didn't know how to name. The lovely shape encased a beautiful Seahorse. Daddy was a Seahorse somewhere else before he was something else in Vietnam. She held the ticket above the Military patch from Daddy's time in the Korean War. She smiled as she was able to read the capital bold faced letters in the exact. "ONE WAY TO SEATTLE, WASHINGTON. THANK YOU FOR GOING GREYHOUND."

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## Imagine All the People

#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as California. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination, and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

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When the Caregiver got the call from California, she knew it was an emergency. Rondell had been out of touch for a long time, yet they were always in touch. The technology that connects the human mind and heart can only be upgraded by compassion, which was a force they always engaged with one another.

Rondell had come a long way, but he had never come so far to talk straight to the Caregiver. He had pulled her out of the fire a few times, and she had done the same for him. Attorneys suffer social isolation in that no one talks to them except criminals and other Attorneys. Sometimes they forget to address themselves about important things, like taking care of their own health and their own families, and worse yet, they forget to talk to God in a quiet way, like we all do.

## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver knew a long time ago that she was not cut out for LSATs and law school, which Rondell had aced many years before. This was a great disappointment to some who considered human potential of greater value than human connection, except Rondell. He valued her counsel more as a Caregiver than an Attorney, and that meant so much to her. It seemed America was so obsessed with a vertical climb up the corporate ladder that they forgot the corps of humankind. Web. Cloud. These were networks, not ladders. They forgot to lay flat and breathe, as their own Mother had done to birth them. To fail to identify the unique form and function of womankind was to prefer war over love. Hail Mary. The Caregiver cringed every time she heard that from a football announcer in relation to a pass. She cringed and confessed every time she used vulgar language.

She had to keep herself very still and simple at all times or she would be consumed by forces that seemed to tell her the lie that she walked alone through this journey of life. Kanye West was right. Jesus walks beside us, not above us. Jesus walks. He doesn't climb without lifting, and to curse His Mother is to curse us all, as she had learned the very hard way. Evil speech was a loaded weapon. It had almost killed her after Momma claimed her own life with that gun near the lighthouse, but now she counted it all joy.

She wasn't cut out for much except being engaged in simple, wholesome solutions to social isolation. She knew the simplicity of helping people to access the law and make things right. She kept her Notary Public and a ruck sack full of caregiver supplies, which seemed to be the best way to move the law forward.

Rondell's sense of panic was quite familiar. He was shooting off at the mouth incoherently, and the fact that she was the first call chosen by this wealthy, famous Compton born Attorney meant that there was true trouble. A minimum wage worker is never the first call for a wealthy worker unless there is trouble money cannot solve.

This was trouble that could not be resolved quickly, with cash money, bonds in the bank, or even freshly cut roses. Rondell had trouble with Mrs. Cruz, or Mrs. C as she was affectionately known. This was not trouble that another Attorney with whom Rondell golfed could solve, and he was too ashamed of himself to ask his Mother for counsel. Rondell had bailed the Caregiver out of jail a few times when he was in law school at Georgetown many years ago. She had been arrested for sleeping in public parks between shifts, so she vowed always to be there for him. Metro didn't always run on Caregiver hours, and legalism had taken over sense in America. Legalism was not bad, but outdated and excessive legalism were criminal. America preferred excessive regulation to principles it seemed, and the Caregiver was grateful Rondell, or Mr. C as she called him, took compassion on her during his brief time as a public defender.

## Imagine All the People

She had the privilege to care for his Mother in Compton a few summers ago, and enjoyed cleaning her home very much. She enjoyed cooking homemade meals from her, and especially enjoyed the genuine praise she received from his beautiful Mother. Their quid pro quo service knit them together as a family, connected now by this current trauma. Current. Current means present moment and electricity. At the present moment the electricity emitted by Mr. C's brain was off the charts. His brain was playing roller derby in the stratosphere. The Caregiver could see his trauma in living color. He was tripping hard. His family had lost their land at Manhattan Beach to eminent domain generations ago. After all, who in Orange County gave Black families permission to own private property? Yet he counted it all joy and kept moving forward. He had lost several cases on his way to making it to billionaire status. He had lost Rolex watches, cars, dogs, and golf games, but now his immediate trauma was that he was about to lose Mrs. C for good. He had been on a wrong trend for too long, and the same situation set her off again.



It was the same situation on repeat. Years before, while vacationing in Florida, Mrs. C had been delighted to shop at Publix where she found their private label paper towels. They were environmentally friendly, super absorbent, and perforated in halves so she could easily determine the proper amount of paper. She had trained all seven of their children the proper use of paper towels, since they were more of a luxury than a necessity. Mrs. C had never had the luxury of using paper towels until she moved from Pascagoula, Mississippi to Compton to live with her Aunt Oletha when her parents died in a car wreck in 1964. She had used old muslin rags, which she scrubbed daily in Borax with hot water boiled on the wood stove to render them clean for use. No one could even access paper towels from the apartheid side of Pascagoula when she was coming of age. It was important to keep certain rags separate from others to prevent infection and cross contamination. People knew little about the struggles of Southern women, particularly Black women, and she cared little to continue her war stories on repeat. Suffice it to say, she knew the value of resources. She taught everyone in her home where the clean chamois cloths, old towels, and sanitary cotton rags were stored. These were to be used to clean up spills, dust furniture, and were separated to avoid cross contamination. Their daughters were never forced to know why certain rags were kept separate in a basket in the Ladies Room. Mrs. C thanked God every day her children had been spared the indignity of scarcity, yet she was alarmed to see this indignity replaced with a certain apathy about waste. Not from her children. This apathy came from Mr. C. It alarmed her a bit, but she adored him, so she let it go. Until now. The head of the home often becomes disconnected from its heart, and this is what happened again today. Mr. C had become disconnected from Mrs. C's values again today, and now was describing in a rather elliptical way how it was connected to the previous incident.

## Imagine All the People

Years ago, upon returning to their Hyde Park home after a wonderful day at Tampa Bay, Mr. C neglected to tighten the base of the blender and spewed an entire pitcher of margaritas all over their Spanish tile kitchen. Mrs. C was not wild about alcoholic beverages in general, nor margaritas in particular, but this was a special occasion. Their children were with their youth group at Disney World, and this was their romantic evening together. Mr. C insisted on cooking her supper. She had asked Mr. C several times never to use her Publix Premium paper towels in the event of a spill. She had shown him where the assortment of clean up rags were located, but her comparatively privileged King took paper goods for granted, since they had always been available on demand to him in California. The spilled margaritas did not upset her at all, since he made another pitcher without her ever being the wiser. It was the morning after this beautiful supper of fresh seafood, margaritas, and marital intimacy that she saw a familiar scene that broke her heart. A man who cooks dinner must also learn to clean up his evidence. Mr. C had loaded the dishwasher with admirable aplomb, but still in a way that proved that he spent more time in the court room than in the kitchen. That much she could let go. What upset her so is that he had used her entire roll of paper towels to clean up the spill. He had done so in a careless manner, so as to leave a thick coat of sticky all over the brand new Spanish tiles. That much she could clean, but what she could not ignore was his alarming lack of control over his own health. He was eating out too much instead of taking the lunch their children packed for him daily. She found fast food wrappers in his Mercedes Benz all too often. He had started smoking cigars again. Mrs. C did not go ballistic in the way usually portrayed of Black women. She did not shout. She did not scream. She did not throw things.

She did the same thing his own Mother had done several times. She elongated her regal neck and sentenced him simply with true conviction, “Rondell. I am truly disappointed in you.” With that she climbed into her BMW and took herself to a leisurely brunch at Treasure Island, while Rondell marinated on her words. He remembered getting in trouble for drinking too much while on liberty during his Navy service many years before. Just the thought of his Captain calling his Mother caused him a sense of doom. White men would have just put him in the drunk tank, and let him out the next day. Black men knew that calling his Mother would be far worse. Captain Ellis was an Old School Military Man, and he understood this archetype well. He knew everything about being a Black man, and took seriously his charge to care for each life in his corps. He made it clear that he was Rondell’s superior and not his brother. He agreed to forfeit all his liberty for the remaining year just so his Mother would not find out. He enforced this loss of liberty objectively and without emotion. It was a square deal, since Mother Cruz never got report of his ill behavior.

Old School Military Men prefer feminine respect to great riches, and Rondell was no exception. Just as Queens prefer their King’s praise to platinum rings, so do Kings prefer their Queen’s respect to Rolex watches. When these forces are lost, everything else is soon to follow.

His Mother and Mrs. C's sentence weighed heavily on his constitution. His constitution had already been taxed by years of life, and bad habits that were getting worse every day. He had indeed survived a lot, but he could not survive this sentence. The first time it had happened, he sweated it out for almost a week after he disappointed his Queen by misuse of her resources. The Caregiver had counseled him then, but there was no global pandemic then. She had helped him remotely when he called her in a panic years ago, as she did today. Now the supply chain and global resource network had been impacted such that paper goods were no longer available on demand as they were years ago. Together they scrubbed every speck of sticky from between Mrs. C's brand new Spanish tiles and ensured he knew to stock the pantry with her favorite brand of paper towels. Then he cleaned out his Benz, emptying it of cigar butts and litter. He scrubbed the leather, and made a VHS video of himself as he toiled. The Caregiver knew that Mrs. C would not be pleased if he merely paid someone else to clean up his mess. The Caregiver reminded Mr. C that his goal was always to earn and maintain her respect, and paying other people money could not do that. He had to work by the sweat of his brow.

This situation was much worse. Mr. C had, by his own confession, been controlling about shopping online. He had been smoking too much weed again, and had fallen into several online conspiracy theory groups. He was adamant that she not shop online. He was paranoid about their privacy. He could not understand why she would shop online, when they had homes all over the world graciously appointed with everything she could ever need by buyers he hired. Again, he had forgotten the importance of her resource economy. He had forgotten how she loved him, organized him, fed him, and invited him to work out with her every day.

“Please. Tell me anything on your mind about how disconnected you have become from Mrs. C’s values”, the Caregiver stated calmly. It was never an interrogation. It was always an invitation. As Epsom Salts drew the poison out of a boil or the ache out of a muscle, so did her calm invitation lead him right to the moment that he began to verge from their shared values.

This time, nothing was so easy. Mr. C had the disadvantage of being in Orange County during wildfires and a run on paper goods. He had used four rolls of paper towels to clean up a Crock Pot full of vegetarian chili he had made to impress her. Once again, she enjoyed the meal, conversation, and marital intimacy her King’s kind gesture afforded his Queen. Once again, she walked into a kitchen that looked more like a crime scene than the elegant center of nutrition she prided herself in keeping spotless. She had schlepped the four rolls of Brawny paper towels, which were not quite her favorite, from their Laguna Beach home to Orange County, since the local WalMart shelves were bare. She had complied with Frank’s paranoid request for her not to shop online. Now in her mind she was back in Mississippi as a young girl with little control over the situation, where dirty rags were all she had to clean up a mess. It was much worse this time. Mrs. C cried as though her heart would break. She was too upset to speak. Her sentence came down in a waterfall of tears that broke his heart. She sat down at the kitchen table, held her beautiful face in her hands, and sobbed with disappointment and heart break. She didn’t need to verbalize how disappointed she was with Mr. C. He knew.

This time things would not be so easy. The Caregiver knew just what to do. Often times the best Old School Military Man is indeed a woman, and so it was with Belle. Belle had Military credentials and titles galore, but like most country people, she preferred simplicity to complication. Belle. Belle meant beautiful, and it was better than any title Amazon or several branches of the Armed Forces had given her. Belle agreed to the Caregiver's plan.

After ordering a monthly subscription of Solimo paper towels to be shipped to all thirty three of their homes, Mr. C donned a clean face mask after taking a shower and realizing he really did need to relax on the weed a bit. Becoming a billionaire afforded him the privilege of comfort, but it had also afforded him the imprisonment of excess and poor judgment.

During his three days on Belle's Amazon Prime fleet, he helped unload cargo, traveled the world, and had Belle's staff from LAX to UAE photograph him assist their hard work to keep inventory moving equitably world wide. Mrs. C's grief, worry, and disappointment finally broke when Mr. C pinged her the third day of photographs. He was working hard to earn her respect again. He was living off beef jerky, fruit leather, bottled water, and raw cashews as he schlepped around the world in an Amazon Prime plane. This new routine slimmed him down by about ten pounds. He was doing hard physical labor to work off some of the alcohol and THC trapped in his fat cells, which had formed an extra fifty pounds on his tall frame. He had ignored his Queen's concern for his health for years now. He had never cheated on her in their marriage bed, of that he was proud. Yet he had cheated on her by not caring enough about her values. Of this he was ashamed, but truly she was so proud of him. He was super high the night he depleted her precious resource of paper towels to sop up some spilled vegetarian chili. He could have done anything to make up for the mess, or he could have done nothing. Instead, he did the right thing and searched his soul. He had forgotten that she could not be impressed by anything more than his own honor.

## Imagine All the People

After they had a heart wrenching, heart warming reconciliation, the Caregiver got the call she had been waiting on all week. Mr. C had won Mrs. C again, and now the Caregiver had to help him with a meaningful 50 Year Wedding Anniversary. He knew now that was better to be itty bitty and change his daily habits in small ways to endear himself to her and win her respect. He knew improving his own health would be a better gift than another diamond ring, which she never asked for anyway. He fell in love with her the nanosecond he laid eyes on her in grammar school. Her energy was so pure, so perfect, so feminine, so positive that he knew she was his Queen. Whether her hair was covered, braided, permed, or natural she was a knock out beauty with nothing but Shea Moisture on her beautiful face. She was more beautiful this way to him than all dolled up on the red carpet. He loved her with all his heart, and he vowed to call the Caregiver before he made a meal or margaritas in the kitchen to plan ahead and avoid strike three on improper allocation of paper towels. The Caregiver was highly honored to keep the Cruz Family knit together in her tiny ways. He pinged her a donation, which she accepted with gratitude. She exhaled with gratitude that her life was yet again of benefit to someone, somewhere in the world. She laid down on her Army cot to catch a nap before her next shift, and admired her bivouac on the hospital's roof. The maintenance people were very kind and kept her hid, in exchange for fresh vegetables and pleasant conversation. It was too much trouble catching the bus back to her temporary room, plus it was not nearly as nice as her open air home on the roof.

The bivouac was beautiful, with planters full of Butternut Squash, Okra, Tomatoes, String Beans, and Marigolds. She realized the one third of the world felt sorry for living in what they perceived as poverty.



## Imagine All the People

The truth was that she felt sorry for them that they had no idea what true wealth was. It was neither for hatred of rich nor poor that she lived as she did, but for the love of God whose engineering genius hung the twinkling stars on the pure black canvas of California night.

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## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver proceeded through the crosswalk after looking both ways, as was her normal custom. The very definition of white privilege could be argued all day and all night, but the Caregiver knew it when she heard it across the Republic.

“That will never happen here”, was the very definition of white privilege. She heard some white folks say these five words, but rarely Black folks. Creating security amongst chaos as Black folks & trailer park people did was better than having a false sense of security. Fortunately, the Caregiver was not that kind of white folks. Everything could happen in the trailer park. People overdosed on heroin, oxycontin, or meth. People beat their wives, husbands, and children. People shot and stabbed one another in drunken brawls. People also shared vegetables from their gardens, waved from their plywood porches, visited their children after they completed Boot Camp, and kept the order she loved in the trailer park. The trailer park was not a ghetto, nor a terrible place. Certainly the trailer park was not a perfect place, but more often than not, a good place. The idea that some people were just born that way and deserved to live in poverty was truly the ghetto in the minds of many.

There was nothing wrong with the suburban white people who meandered through intersections like geese who laid golden eggs, wandering about gracefully, expecting traffic to stop at the sight of them. Money had made them soft over generations. Nothing was wrong with them per se, but soon they would have to make it right.

## Imagine All the People

These were the same white people who donned expensive gear to plunge into the ocean and scuba dive. Fine and dandy. When the Caregiver was walking on top of the dirt, she was close to the top of the food chain. When she was in the ocean, she was on the bottom of the food chain. This is all she knew. She kept in mind at all times that anything could happen at any time any where, and it was best to be prepared without being scrunched up.

She kept a discerning eye as she walked on the straight and narrow path between the yellow lines, then heard a familiar sound Mr. Stout had taught her years before. One of the many things she remembered well of him was that he taught her mechanics. She knew the sound of a master cylinder when it broke, and now she saw the sight of it in the form of a beat up Toyota Camry careening down the hill right toward her. It seemed the steering wheel had gone loose too, and she discerned the same thing she knew in her heart even as she scrambled across the street. Sometimes you just had to take the hit. So she breathed into her best Gilda Radner pose, guarding her teeth with her tongue, tucking her head into her crotch and lacing her arms across the back of her head. She kept her generous hips pointed right at the smashed front grill of the burnt sienna colored Toyota and braced for impact as the car shimmied, spun, twisted, and grabbed her butt and threw her into the air before smashing into the phone pole. She rolled about three times before springing up from the pavement in good cheer. The good news is that Mr. Emmett was okay, which was her ultimate goal. Mr. Emmett was walking through the other intersection, and even with his good health at age 97 years young he would not be able to take the hit like the Caregiver could.

## Imagine All the People

It reminded her of a dream she had of Gunsmoke's parents. Her cat had been rejected at birth by a Mother who was angry that her husband died. What she could not have known is that this feline Father obeyed the command God gave him and started running like a streak of lightning straight into the passenger tire of the car. What she could not have known at the time is that loud thump caused by her beloved's body being crushed by the car was enough to jolt the drunken driver awake so he did not have a head on collision with a pregnant woman trying to get home from work in the dark. There was really no evidence that life was peaceful. We all hurt one another. We only create peace through understanding the situation, and the Caregiver knew that taking a hit was part of life.

Citrus flew everywhere on the burning hot pavement. It was burgeoning from the beat up little car with the Florida tag, strewn all over the intersection. Pink, white, and golden grapefruit showered the intersection as curious pigeons flew by in the summer sun. She erected herself, popped the pockets of air from her joints, cured her subluxation with a few quick twists, fixed her face mask on, picked the asphalt from her skin, and breathed deeply.

She was on her way to Aunt Bea's home to meet with her and her new friend, Arthur, for the wonderful home cooked supper they offered. They did not live too far from the trailer park. She withdrew the clean, warm, wet wash cloth soaked in Epsom Salts from its Ziploc bag in one of the compartments in her knap sack. She cleaned herself up and walked toward Mr. Emmett, who looked fresh in his brand new Red Tail Squadron Tuskegee Airmen baseball cap. "Baby Girl, are you alright?" She stood six feet back from him, and answered confidently, "Yes, Sir. I am fine. I wish I could accept your hug right now. I love you." He smiled and held his arms up and said, "Praise God, Baby Girl. We will hug again soon." Mr. Emmett was the very definition of her favorite, The Old School Military Man. He walked to Pitts Barber Shop every week for a fresh cut, smelled of Old Spice, and had impeccably clean work clothes. He spoke little of his World War II experience, since the greater battle he faced awaited when he came home to Mississippi after earning Ace as a Tuskegee Airman. No one would offer him wages he deserved for his skills as an aircraft mechanic in Mississippi. No one would treat him with the respect every individual deserved, so he moved to Atlanta and built a life there many years ago. The Caregiver understood this, and never asked him any direct questions. He had been her rock for so many years now. He taught her something new every day, and reminded her of the Red Tail Squadron Motto:

1. Aim High
2. Rise Above
3. Expect to Win
4. Never Quit

## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver was so grateful for Mr. Emmett, who grounded her when she felt like a kite without a string. She thanked God for all the times she was bullied for her beautiful Black shape, which was strange to some given her skin was pink and freckled, and her hair flame red. One Ton Bun. Bubble Butt. Other names too horrible to repeat that made being shaped Black seem ugly, but she knew Black was beautiful. She learned to avoid the other white kids and not worry what they called her. They were suburban brats with no idea of Military values. She wished them no harm, because soon enough their ignorance would be made right. Her shape had just saved her life, as it had so many times before. Her shape had just helped an Old School Military Man extend his life, which made her so happy. Thank God she was built to be in the fields, although she craved being in her little home.

Vera and Juan rushed over to her with a guilty conscious and sincere apologies that were motivated by love for their neighbor, and not fear for legalism. They offered her their insurance card, but the Caregiver explained this was not necessary since she chose public transportation, walking, biking, and assumed authority over her movements no matter the case. There was a time and place to accept the offer of an insurance claim, but the mechanical failure of a 25 year old car with no air conditioning in the sultry August heat that Georgia afternoon was neither the time nor place. She said something familiar to them both, then noticed the boxes of lemons carefully wedged into the back seat of their little Toyota Camry. “I trust you to make it right with me. No need to involve insurance.”

She remembered Arthur telling her the quality of the lemon poppy seed cake depended on the freshness of its ingredients. She wondered why these boxes of freshly picked lemons were shrink wrapped and carefully situated, whereas the grapefruit had been placed loosely on top of the boxes before flying out the windows of their little vehicle. They caught the question in her eyes, and Vera spoke plainly as Juan gathered up what produce he could salvage. Neighbors walked up from the trailer park to see what was on the scene, and Bonnie gathered up grapefruit with the efficiency of a true country person, placing the large round fruits in the portion of her long skirt below her knees so as to gather them tightly and keep them safe from gravity. Bonnie had worked for years around automation, because her organizational skills were highly valued and engineers wanted to replicate them. Although she had retired from manufacturing at 40 years young, she did not sit on her laurels. She purchased the humble little Atlanta trailer park where she grew up and spruced it up day by day.

As it turned out, the lemons were for Aunt Bea. Juan and Vera knew Aunt Bea well, and had a barter arrangement set up with her and Arthur in trade for some of her world famous lemon poppy seed cake.

Aunt Bea knew a great many things about a great many subjects, and believed that the open source of ideas was key to making the world a better place. She shared information freely about anything you would ask her, except her world famous lemon poppyseed cake. She never wrote her recipes down, but you could get a general idea of her operations if you were willing to help her source the ingredients, clean up the kitchen, and wrap the finished goods. Aunt Bea made 50 cakes per month, which were sold, bartered, shared, and enjoyed in good company.

## Imagine All the People

When the Caregiver helped clean everything up, she finished cleaning herself up as best as she could before approaching the grand porch Arthur had restored with his own sweat equity. The front entrance of the home was so super cozy. Aunt Bea's home was jam up and jelly tight. Simple and clean were the two forces that made a home jam up and jelly tight. Magnolias, honeysuckle, jasmine and marigolds perfumed the Georgia air as fireflies illuminated the dusk.

Aunt Bea had always preferred a data driven approach to superstition or legalism, and today's events proved that her resource economy was the best way to make a wrong thing right. When she found out what happened on the way to supper, she did the thing that no amount of formal education could ever do to heal another human being. She looked into the Caregiver's eyes, gave her full attention and drew her close in a loving embrace while maintaining a safe social distance. It is possible to embrace someone without touching them, and this genius would be learned soon. Now that was worth taking a hit for Mr. Emmett. Aunt Bea knew the border that must be broken world wide was social isolation. She never doubted her own genius, nor that of others. She delighted in how the Caregiver cleaned her plate of collard greens, black eyed peas, oven fried chicken, and cornbread. She was impressed with how the Caregiver never asked if she could help wash the dishes, but instead rose up from her place and cleared the table without asking. What Aunt Bea could not have fully known is how much the Caregiver appreciated her maternal touch.

It was worth taking a hit just to enjoy life's greatest blessing, to love and to be loved.

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## Imagine All the People

This has been an unofficial 23:59 report from Planet Earth. Imagine the possibilities when we connect through compassion and mutual guarantee.

#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as Atlanta. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination, and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

It is impossible to fail when we imagine the possibilities to solve every problem. Our results may fail every so often, but when we collaborate to improve our methods then we will eliminate failure and deliver best results.

Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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The Caregiver took the long way home, which might have seemed more dangerous than the quick route. The quick route up this sidewalk and down that one was actually more painful in every way. Bright lights from the quick route home hurt her brain worse after working such a long shift with little to eat since the last donation. She didn't want to focus on that, since the family in need had no money and few groceries either. Her hunger and fatigue would be eased by taking the long way home.

## Imagine All the People

After working a physically and emotionally demanding 12 hour shift with a human being who was at the end of this life, it was necessary to take the long way home. This is what death truly is for all life; the long way home. Helped were the human beings that realized no one should wish to escape the long way home. No short cut could help you avoid the long way home, no matter who you were and how you were born to this life. You would also die, at that's alright if we take care of our lives.

She ducked away from the bright lights of the big city of downtown Atlanta and navigated through alley ways and side streets, taking care not to step on the flora and fauna that poked through the concrete in defiant declaration of its own value. She dressed as she normally would after removing her soiled scrubs, hair covering, and wrapping these tightly in a Ziploc bag before showering and donning clean scrubs, hair covering, and undergarments. She did this with the family's permission, and scrubbed everything before and after her shower.

This was the long way home. The family appreciated her thorough attention to detail, and did not count it as slow, stupid, and overly sensitive as money drunk Americans normally do. Money was only a tool, as was wine. People who got drunk with these things forget that fact. Money was not people. It was so sad to the Caregiver to see beautiful people from all nations forget the methodical nature of life's slow evolution and remember only the time value of money within a space of a few generations living in America. Helped were those who identified all people, places, and things correctly. Time was not money. Time was time. Time was measured in finite numbers sometimes, and infinite numbers most of the time. Otherwise we wouldn't be dead for so long.

Otherwise the memory of a loved one whose life had passed from the mortal body to the immortal realm would not seem to ease the pace of time and space. Money was not the best measure of time. Health was the best measure, but America had forgotten this fact. Maybe America never knew what Fathers and Mothers were communicating all these generations. Life comes in quick shots and slow cycles. So it was with taking the long way home. Taking the long way home involved showering before and after work, truly a luxury in America that should be a necessity for all.

She stepped over cracks, not out of superstition, but a knowledge that there was life there in the margins. She did her best to stay in the present time and space, but her mind was necessarily connected to the living soul whose failing body was tucked between the clean muslin sheets she had just laid on the bed before his family came to relieve her for the night. Properly divining their tradition in silence, she took care not to disturb the many candles nor augment the light with current from the many switches, buttons, and knobs modern life provides. Taking the long way home was a slow burning effect, just like a candle's wax melting away as the spirit departs for infinity. His spirit came to her in colors of red, yellow, and green. She loved him so, and treasured his every story, and their every moment together.

Suddenly with a whoosh, he appeared. At first, she was frightened. She felt her central nervous system clench, until she was reminded to take a deep breath of blow out the flames of fear that often burned bright. She remembered the wisdom to receive and give freely with open palm, never to be closed tightly with a clenched fist.

## Imagine All the People

His face reminded her of someone she had seen a long time ago in Florabelle, Florida as a child fostered by the Stout family. His Black face scared her a bit, as her white face scared him. He reminded her of someone and something a long time ago, as she reminded him of cruel people.

She remembered long ago, unable to sleep in the same bed where her cat, Gunsmoke, protected her. After her foster parent, Mr. Stout, shot her favorite companion, a renegade gun powder grey cat named Gunsmoke, she often snuck out of the dilapidated tin roofed farm house. Its high ceilings and attic fan offered little comfort, and no modern screens fitted into the large windows to keep the critters out. Tattered flags from a conquered nation with fading stars and bars fluttered about in the sultry night breeze. The way Mr. Stout said her name when he entered her room that first night made her hate herself worse than her first name. Dixie. She preferred to be called by her middle name, Joy.

She learned a long time ago that if you worked hard enough, you could be invisible, and incorporate a little sprinkle and a big slice of infinity into each day. For her, this time was at night after she had fed the Stout family, who continually reminded her of their huge investment in her welfare in dollars and cents. They never considered her investment of unpaid labor. She counted it all joy, ensuring their evening meals were heavy laden with fried foods, pork, and lard as they so richly loved. The more spectacularly and silently she served their evening meal, the heavier they slept, and the quicker she could climb through the window on to the back porch and steal away to Scarborough Pond.

## Imagine All the People

Time was never measured by money for the Caregiver. Time was measured by calories. By taking Mr. Stout's every beating with joy for refusing to eat their heavy fried foods, and snacking all day instead on the plentiful fruits, nuts, legumes, vegetables, eggs, and grains so plentiful on the land, she had enough time and space to commune with God in the pure black of night while they slumbered with stomachs heavy laden to their delight.

The Caregiver learned to become invisible and valuable by June Bugging around all day to field strip every surface, compartment, and landscape of the land legally owned by the Stout family. They were cruel, but they didn't know better. They could also be very kind, so she focused on that. In their limited perception, an orphaned foster child was property just like their livestock. She preferred to live with the lives known as livestock, where under the mulberry tree's welcome shade she could read by the light of her Coleman kerosene lantern she carried with her since Momma took her own life near the lighthouse years before.

The Caregiver field stripped everything with great care, from the barns where lambs, goats, pigs, chickens & turkeys slept to all seven rooms of the 1873 built farm house, to every acre of neatly planted vegetation, to her secret spot at Scarborough Pond where water mocassins, alligators, and mosquitoes silently welcomed her to their pure arcanum of onyx. None of them moved suddenly, and their lives connected while their bodies did not in the velvet black of night. This was her hiding place, the space where she could be alone with God, float naked on her back, stare at the moon and stars, only made visible by the wholesome, healing, pure power in the black of night. It made her feel brand new, just like Grammy and Poppy did when they took her to the little brown Methodist Church in the vale many moons ago before their bodies died. It made her feel like a virgin.

## Imagine All the People

As the alley ways of Atlanta frightened her rarely, neither did the back woods of rural Florida scare her. Tonight she was scared, so she sipped from this soothing memory to call her to present time and handle the situation with best results.

Bathing in her Birthday Suit so many moons ago, the Caregiver enjoyed the muddy waters of Scarborough Pond, always swimming to the sweet spot, where a cool tributary soothed the open wounds and welts on her back, buttocks, legs, and feet. She called herself from Scarborough Pond to present time, and saw the transportation worker's face as it was here and now, not as it reminded her of his Black face many moons ago.

One night, she snuck out earlier than usual and climbed up the mighty Oak tree, high enough to touch the spot where her Estes model rocket had been stuck for ages. She divined why it had changed its trajectory and got caught in the Oak tree.

Mr. Stout was kind enough to buy her the kit, and encouraged her to put it together in his messy, filthy garage shop. She organized and cleaned his sacred tool space for him much to his delight, expediting his repair of cars, tractors, weed eaters, and lawn mowers. This was their truce. This was their sweet spot.

She loved to build things in his garage, but like that little Estes model rocket, she seemed to be tangled in the limbs of the Stout's firmly rooted family tree that kept her from shooting to the stars. She didn't hate Mr. Stout. She hated the way he called her names and insults since the day her Estes model rocket launch ended in failure. Or was it a failure?

Had her Estes model rocket not been stuck there, she would not have known the exact path, the quickest route, to scamper up that mighty Oak tree with a whoosh. It was the reason she had a clear view of Scarborough Pond every night, to survey the scene before bathing there with the flora and fauna. It was the reason she saw this one terrifying scene in the peanut field East of Scarborough Pond that same night that reminded her of this night. She saw a wooden cross burning brightly, and his Black face steeled in silence. His hands were tied above his head, as were his feet below, to a wooden plank. As Gunsmoke did not protest or scream the morning after he had attacked Mr. Stout for entering her bedroom the night before, neither did this Black man scream and protest. His strength and silence reminded her of what Gunsmoke taught her many moons ago. Encourage the enemy's arrogance. Do not yield to him by feeding his arrogance with screams of protest. His quiet courage and calm were clear. The stillness and silence in his soul remained unbroken from his captured voice. His voice would be barely audible beneath the filthy cloth stuffed tightly against his tonsils so as to gag him and allow air only through his nostrils.

## Imagine All the People

His courage reminded her of Gunsmoke. The morning after Gunsmoke attacked Mr. Stout for entering her bedroom, he stood still in the corner as ten men blocked him. He knew his position was certain death, but he still gave the enemy no quarter. He encouraged their arrogance and licked his lips with delight, counting it all joy as they slipped the burlap sack over his beautiful body. He fought like he should fight when he knew death was soon to come to his body. He fought it within his mind, sending Mr. Stout his colors in silence, never giving him the satisfaction only cowards desire. Like the Caregiver, Gunsmoke never begged any man for his life. He prayed to God for his soul. He knew he was a Elder cat, and she was a human child. It was not wholesome for the Elders to harm their youth for their own gain, as he had seen people do with alarming increase during his lifetime. It was time for his body to die, and he fell asleep with great adoration and content for God, and his parents. He felt the warm glow of his final years on the farm with her. He adored the Caregiver, as she adored him. He was her Hero, and she was his Heroine.

Gunsmoke knew his prayers were heard by God, and he knew he was a cat. Few people knew all lives are precious like a cat, because no one can ever truly own a cat. Dogs have owners; cats have staff as the saying goes. So it was that all life depended on other lives, but Gunsmoke watched a world where people forgot that until the Caregiver showed him love and compassion that sweltering August day many moons ago. He heard with great fury Mr. and Mrs. Stout compare their foster children to cats, and wondered why human beings failed to identify their own divinity. God don't make no junk, as he often heard the Caregiver say to him as she stroked his thick fur. Cats were cats. People were people. It seemed to him cats treated their children better than people.



## Imagine All the People

They would wait until the entire Stout family went to town, then snuggle up, watch Gunsmoke, Bonanza, and Soul Train on the little UHF/VHF Sony TV with its tin foil covered rabbit ears in their sacred space together. What a life he enjoyed. He was at peace.

Cats possess people. People possess people, in ways sometimes cruel, but more often kind. No one truly owns anyone except God. The Caregiver knew this fact. She was Gunsmoke's shepherdess, his Mistress, when others had rejected him at birth. He was the runt of the litter, the only boy whose three sisters were beautiful Calicos. Father had been killed three moons after he married Mother and started their family. Mother could not bear the site of him, so scrawny and little with his thick dark grey coat. He looked just like her Mr., and the site of him so scrawny reminded her too much of how she found her beloved in the ditch decaying amidst litter of beer bottles and Nehi soda caps. So Gunsmoke learned to hunt, fish, swim, fight, kill, and above all, protect Mother and his sisters. Like the Caregiver, he regarded womankind as holy above holy creatures, cruel though they could sometimes be. More often that not, they were kind. Gunsmoke had lived long enough to find a woman who loved him just the way he was – old, stoic, and grey. He was happy to die in her service, and prayed she would live a long, happy, healthy life full of love and laughter. More important, he prayed God would seek justice against the Stout family whose many sins against their foster daughter he witnessed.

## Imagine All the People

He went slack with slumber, remembering how beautiful the Caregiver was, how generous, how kind, how compassionate, how brave she was. He remembered why he refused to eat the dried cat food placed in bowls often invaded by ants the Caregiver left on the back porch for the other stray cats who wandered in off the little country crossroads. He was Elder, and gifted in the arts of hunting, fattening himself on many scampering creatures after tenderizing their meat. People often criticized cats for how they ate their meat, while ignoring their own filthy habits with animal protein. It was true that he would torture snakes, mice, and squirrels for days underneath the stilted farm house, but he was only tenderizing the meat. It was the same thing people did with calves to enjoy their veal, but in his opinion done with more justice since he protected human lives from these other critters. Gunsmoke was careful to preserve the dried food for the scrawny young feminine felines, whose lives mattered only to him and the Caregiver. He protected them all because that was God's intelligent design. He loved them all more than his own life, as he loved his Mother.

He remembered in peaceful sleep how wonderful the Caregiver felt as she slept on her back beneath his body, lovingly sprawled on top of hers. The beautiful rhythm of her heartbeat reminded him of his Mother, a Dave Brubeck melody, finding fresh fish at the racetrack, his many wives and children, and an infinite number of beautiful scenes in his amazing life. He did not give the cowardly Mr. Stout the satisfaction of begging for his life as he slept inside the burlap feed sack, imagining it to be his Mother's womb. He imagined the burlap sack to be the beautifully budding landscape of the Caregiver's young body he protected with such vigor and stealth, in life and death. Gunsmoke would live inside her beautiful memory forever. Mr. Stout set the burlap feed sack down, once full of grain to feed the chickens, now an enclosure for his cowardly firing squad.

## Imagine All the People

Mr. Stout never knew how lethal a weapon Gunsmoke had between his ears. Gunsmoke's beautiful mind unleashed his true colors in telepathic jujitsu to the coward who killed him, Mr. Stout. His beautifully masculine, uncastrated feline mind unfurled into infinity as Mr. Stout unloaded an entire magazine of ammunition into his slumbering body. Mr. Stout bragged to the other nine men about how mighty his weapon was, telling tall tales of the gun, forgetting that the more men talk the less men think.

The men really were not at all impressed with how he had just killed his foster daughter's cat, but they were scared to speak up. Mr. Stout had more power than them, and more guns. They had been raised on hate and shame just like him, and feared him more than God. It was a sad thing in rural Florida landscapes, besotted with the same tragedies as Scotland and Ireland generations before. They knew it was cruel, and it was wrong. They knew Gunsmoke's spirit was more powerful than any gun, and his stoic silence reminded them of what they knew of Braveheart, but that was another tale to tell.

So it was that night that the Caregiver steeled herself in resolve, like Gunsmoke taught her, and raced down the tree with an almighty force and ran to the field. She poured a bit of kerosene from her Coleman lamp into the burn barrel near Mr. Stout's prized garage with the rows of neatly organized Snap On tools she had taken great care to hang on the new peg board she had nailed to the walls.

## Imagine All the People

She lit the burn barrel with her Zippo lighter. Fire burst from its center, causing smoke to rise through the pipe. She tore off through the fields, waving her arms wildly and screaming, “Daddy! Your shop is on fire! Help!” Knowing that she had seen them all, they all ran, as only cowards do when they value a 1956 Corvette sitting in the garage shop more than the Black life they are about to steal. They didn’t hate him because he was Black; they hated him because he was prosperous. This conflicted with their idea of what Black folks should be. They hated him because he had completed University of Florida on the GI Bill after returning from Vietnam. They hated him because he owned sixteen trucking rigs, and because he was the best diesel mechanic in the entire area. They hated him because he had just won a county repair contract they wanted. They wanted him dead, fed to the alligators, and to keep all the county business for themselves. They were corrupt, and they thought nothing of their wives at home, nor their children asleep in their beds. They cared nothing for this Veteran’s beautiful wife and six children, who were sick with worry, as they had expected him home many hours ago for supper.

Steeling herself for the terror that was soon to come for committing the crime of providing this life saving distraction, she loosened the bonds on the Black Father whose life had been bound in terror that night. He could run; she could not. She would only endanger him more if she tried to accompany him and run away. She knew she would have to stay and take the terrible punishment due her from Mr. Stout. Florida's foster system was so overloaded with cases, that the entire world forgot they were children. Legalism objectified everything and everyone as a case when people forgot God's intelligent design. She was more of a case than a child, except to the Black Father who blessed her that night. Children were necessary, and wonderful in a world that remembered eternal truths. In a world that valued things over people, children were only a source of anxiety. People would fight over whether children were blessings from God or curses from man, and forget how much children could help them all. So it was that she resolved to take her punishment.

Like the little Estes model rocket she so wanted to launch to the stars, she felt him launch into the stars. This beautiful Black Father quickly & deliberately drew a cross on her forehead with his left thumb as an eternal reminder for them all. Then he shot West into the fields, with more speed and purpose than the little Estes model rocket had a few moons before, toward the highway where he could take the long way home and find help.

Although the transportation worker reminded her of him, she knew in this moment of truth that he was himself, and called herself into present time and space with a simple, confident greeting. "Good evening, Sir."

He was frightened of her. Who was this strangely dressed woman? Was she a Dr.? A Nurse? She scared him with her fuzzy red hair covered in a scarf, bright blue medical scrubs, open formal greeting, and the weapon she held in her left hand. Was she a crude person like the white women who visited his country as a child? Did she pretend to be kind, but wanted something cruel from him, as many white women thought of a Black man for only “having sex”? He had learned the hard way from American women. American men and women who only want to have sex are committing an act of consumption.

Perhaps this is one reason most American people were so fat, consuming sex like so much fast food purchased from drive thru lines, eating in their moving cars with multiple blasts of digital input. It was not really their fault, since it seemed American men valued their daughters little these days. Their daughters looked for their Daddy in empty one night stands and scores of junk food. He didn't know what to think of the men. He only knew he would kill them if they ever tried to touch any woman in a wrong way in his witness. This is how domestic violence was handled in his native land.

If you are what you eat, then most American women seemed tasteless and empty compared to the thick and rich women in his native land and in the countrysides of Georgia. He preferred them to the city women for sure. They were healthy, friendly, and hospitable. Women in all colors were God's most beautiful creation, but it seemed American men had forgotten that. There was a difference between being thick and rich, and fat and in poor taste. He knew it well and preferred his studies and his focus on the future to the crude advances of American women.

## Imagine All the People

Arthur prayed to God for a woman who would wait for their marriage bed, and challenge him to be his best. Having sex was a crude act of American consumption. Making love with his wife was a sacred act of production. Making love with his wife would be a sacred act that would heal him. He prayed for her every day, and hoped she would appear in God's time, which was always one time.

There was the difference between eating fast food alone in the car, or eating a nutritious homemade meal with family and loved ones. America seemed to forget that, in human relationships. He noticed LGBTQ-Plus people in Atlanta courting one another with more caution and class than most men and women had these days. It frightened him, as that white woman who tried to degrade him so many moons ago in his native country still frightened him today. Black men and all people were more than just their sex. He hated to be teased and thought of as gay because he was waiting on his wife, but he would endure this heartache and humiliation to stand on the promises of God.

He wanted to build his wife up to a Queen. Would he die in this alley way tonight as he had almost been killed by a white woman many moons ago? Would he live long enough to meet his Queen? The promise of her was greater than his ambition for money, although he would have plenty of that as a result of making the world a better place. He had no loaded weapon, since he could not qualify for his gun permit until he took his Oath of Affirmation next month. He was truly terrified, yet he thanked God. His prayers trumped his terror.

## Imagine All the People

Sons were Princes. Daughters were Princesses. No child would be in his heart like his daughters, whether born of his seed or adopted. He loved them all. He remembered the young girls in his native country and wanted to adopt them all. They suffered too much for simple things, yet they pressed forward and counted it all joy with their incredible beauty and genius much of the world knew not.

Men are not provoked to war for God, country, and family. Men are provoked to war in defense of womankind. Wars must no longer be fought for chivalry, but for best results. Wars would be fought by understanding what Einstein didn't fully explain. If people could not prevent and prepare for war as Einstein said, then neither could they prevent and prepare for love. Wars would be fought with better weapons than those that shed blood soon, by God's grace and the power of his own mind. All human conflict can be solved by reason alone. He had suffered a lot and come a long way to bring his innovations to the world through Atlanta, and he prayed this night would not end his mission on Earth.

There had to be a better way than rape, pillage, and burn. These thoughts came to him as the fear turned to reason and he remembered his Mother's wisdom. Love. Village. Earn. Here was the better way than rape, pillage, and burn. People all had the seeds that lead to the stars if they would only slow down and take care of every gift God provides.

He turned his mind to the strange woman passing before him this night from across the alley. She scared him. What did she have in her hand? Was it a loaded gun? Did she know he was studying for his GMAT to enter Morehouse College? Who was this woman? He remembered his Mother's words of wisdom and breathed deeply, and raised both hands in surrender.



“Please, Madame. Take from me what you want.” He perceived her to be armed with a gun, but in the white light from the street lamp, he had a new concept as she opened her palm, raised her hands also in surrender, silently offered herself in peace, and so revealed the same weapon his Mother carried at all times. The Rosary. The Rosary’s Cross dropped from where it had been wrapped around her hand and inside her palm in constant prayer. They both laughed in solace from behind their face masks.

She pointed to his wallet and quietly said the same three words she first spoke as a Baby, “Put it away.” He replaced his wallet, then she asked the second set of three words she first learned as a Baby. “Are you alright?” He considered her question, and remembered how embarrassed he had been by American people asking a similar question, “How are you?”. When he first arrived to Atlanta to care for his Aunt Bea and attend university many moons ago, he answered the question politely with more detail than most Americans wanted. He was humiliated to see them keep passing him by, as he tried to tell them about his success finding a new used car, or the homemade lemon poppy seed cake his Aunt Bea made fresh every Monday for all to enjoy, then inviting them for a slice with coffee and conversation.

He realized Americans were not interested in any answer to this question, “How are you?” He realized they did not stop and count their time by calories enjoyed in community with family and neighbors, as was his custom, as was the custom in his native country, and the custom of so many loving Elders in Georgia’s beautiful landscape. He loved to stop by and visit his next door neighbor every day, a World War II Veteran who was recently widowed. When the Elder asked him, “How are you, Son?”, he truly wanted to hear, he wanted to enjoy a slice of cake with him and enjoy a chat.

## Imagine All the People

It was ironic to him that Elders like his World War II Hero, his foster Father Mel, were not fat at all, just a little thick and rich like his beautiful Aunt Bea. Elders like him would never refuse a social invitation, and were happy eat his Aunt Bea's wholesome lemon poppyseed cake. Let them slow down and eat Aunt Bea's homemade lemon poppyseed cake and they would be comforted.

Let them be in an almighty rush and eat fast food, and they would be bloated with empty calories. Most Americans would refuse his invitation for Aunt Bea's homemade lemon poppyseed cake, because they were on a diet and they were sure this would make them fat. What they didn't know is that they were already empty. The emptiest calories are those consumed in social isolation.

Arthur felt this same warmth Father Mel glowed now from the Caregiver, although the whiteness of her skin had initially scared him. She was a different kind of white than the World War II Veteran, with many orange freckles that he initially found quite disgusting. He suddenly felt no less kin to her, as he truly was kin to Father Mel, who loved him. Son in word and deed Arthur was indeed to Father Mel. Father Mel who had lived next door to his Aunt Bea for over forty years had changed his mind about white people, but not erased his good judgement about the America's upside down values. Arthur remembered himself, and addressed her truthfully. He was a little scared she would walk by, as most Americans do when they ask "How are you?"

He bowed slightly in respect, responding with formal confidence and stating his case clearly. “It is well, Madame. My Uber car is broke down and my iPhone has no charge.” Silently she set a small towel down on the asphalt. She laid her iPhone and a portable tool kit she retrieved from her knap sack down on the clean towel, then stepped back. “Please be welcome for these tools. I trust you to return them. I will be at Grady Memorial Hospital Emergency Room entrance at noon tomorrow.”

Before he could respond, she moved swiftly into the night. What was in the toolbox? He had plenty of cash, but it did him no good at this hour. It was after midnight, and everything was shut down since Covid-19 had chopped his income in half. He was disoriented by fear, hunger, and digital overload. He had run his iPhone down caring for his family all over the world remotely in between fares in his Uber car. What was the matter with his 1976 Ford Pinto? Others mocked him for driving such a car, but his Aunt Bea kept it in immaculate condition, as did he. Its brand new tires, souped up engine, and interior were carefully tended. He changed the oil regularly. He appreciated the simplicity of its design, although it was not a popular vehicle back in the day. With its manual transmission and good gas mileage, the little brown Ford Pinto provided a good return on working capital and return on investment for Arthur.

Arthur picked up the tools she had left him and walked toward his stalled vehicle. He engaged the iPhone’s flashlight, and suddenly illuminated the problem. Now he knew why he could not depress the clutch. He picked up the pin, which had worked its way out of the clutch’s pedal, and assembled it again with the Allen wrench in the canvas zippered toolkit.

## Imagine All the People

He did not know who that woman was, but he did find out from her iPhone. Joy. What a perfect name for her. He counted it all joy, even the trouble his family had since April. Covid-19 hit his native country harder than America, and he promised to stay strong for them in Georgia.

He drove to Grady Memorial Hospital at noon the next day, happy to see his new friend. She was even more grateful for him, since he was the best return on working capital and return on investment she had made that week. They reminded each other that courage can conquer cowardice, and we must all press forward because of fear, not in spite of fear. Powering through the fear build's bravery's muscle. He asked her a question he hoped she would answer honestly. "How are you, Madame?"

She hesitated for a moment, then exhaled slowly beneath her shock pink face mask and told the truth. "I am hungry and tired, yet I thank God." With that, he left a brown bag lunch on the common area six feet from her, smiled, bowed, and walked away. It was hard for her to receive gifts, but she retired to the bench outside ER and ate for the first time in over 24 hours.

The homemade tuna fish sandwich on pita bread, Roma apple slices, and homemade lemon poppy seed cake replenished her mind, body, and soul. This delicious gift of human kindness and compassionate connection was enough to fuel her as she walked toward the family who needed her help. She prayed for their beautiful loved one as he took the long way home toward this mortal life's end.

## Imagine All the People

How rich were those who knew the true value of things in life, and how grateful she was for the gift of connection her new friend provided. She walked with purpose, and stepped over the cracks, making sure to respect all lives in the margins, with God at the center. A cool breeze lilted from the Georgia foothills to the downtown city street, offering her grace from the heat and humidity. She stopped for a moment as a budding dandelion greeted her from a crack in the concrete. She remembered two Black lives more important than the little model Estes rocket with its failed launch many moons before. Had the little model Estes rocket not been stuck in the trees, neither would she have learned the true value of human life, and so launched a more important mission in her life.

Some people missed Mayberry, the fictional North Carolina town depicted in black and white on the Andy Griffith show. The Caregiver didn't miss Mayberry, because she never missed her target. She never aimed at anything that was not her intended target, and she always knew what was beyond her target. Mayberry was not her target, so she didn't miss it at all. Mayberry remains a state of mind in living color right here and now.

She was right there in Downtown Atlanta, as she read the beautifully hand written note from Arthur's Aunt Bea, tucked neatly underneath her famous sumptuous homemade lemon poppyseed cake. It read, "Thank you, Miss Joy, for helping my Arthur last night.

We are your family now. Come to the house two doors East from the trailer park on Peach Cobbler Trail to have supper with us tomorrow. Love, Aunt Bea." Mayberry. A state of mind in living color.

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This has been an unofficial 23:59 report from Planet Earth. Imagine the possibilities when we connect through compassion and mutual guarantee.

## Imagine All the People

#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as Ybor City. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination, and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

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Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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The charity worker began her day with a morning routine she had adapted for decades. Perhaps the groom of her youth was right. She was an engineer of her own mind and her own environment. Perhaps he was also right. She often ate her emotions. That's why she got fat after birthing their fourth child.

He was happy with three daughters, but she wanted a son. It was worth it to her to get the spitting image of her own Father and husband in their fourth child, but it was not worth it to feel like an unwanted fat cow.

## Imagine All the People

Facts were just as important as feelings, so she adapted her morning routine to make sure she burned more calories than she ate. She made sure her exercise routine gave her a winning mindset by providing her the best brain fuel known to humankind: Oxygen. Her healthy habits had paid off, by giving her beauty and vibrance at age 65. She often got hit on by men half her age, but she was not interested.

Today would be a good day. She had a made up mind for that. Not a great day, but a good day. She still had an index card her Mother made her taped to her makeup mirror. The words reminded her how her Mother always made the best of every circumstance, how much she survived, and how her very existence was a state of excellence. In her Mother's lovely cursive script Henry Kissinger's words spoke as she preened her face daily. "Let not excellence be the enemy of good."

She would choose to see the good in all people, places, pets, and things. Today she had to go help a family who lived above their machine shop in Ybor City. They didn't have a ride to the VA Clinic, where their Mother depended on services as a World War II Veteran.

## Imagine All the People

She hadn't missed Abraham this intensely since she left him many moons ago now. She had been praying for him since the Covid-19 outbreak. It was true that he had been verbally abusive and controlling with money since her third pregnancy. She was the one who insisted on natural family planning, since she wanted one brown eyed baby who favored her, Abraham, and her beautiful Father. Gabriel was just that, and now she wondered if she hadn't put their children above her marriage. Abraham adored their three daughters, Hannah, Lilith, and Tabitha with their fair hair and periwinkle blue eyes. Lauren loved all their children, but admitted a favoritism of her youngest, Gabriel. He was a Brown Eyed Handsome Man, just like the Chuck Berry song she used to dance to with her beautiful parents in their cozy, clean little kitchen. Gabriel was scared of being a Father to a son, since he lost his own Father in the war. What trials and tribulations he suffered as the man of the house were too much to bear. Sexual abuse numbs the human mind, but it is especially cruel to men. It makes them feel like they're not even men anymore.

He just couldn't bear the thought of a son, since he didn't want him ever to be abused. He knew how to protect his daughters, but he had no idea how to protect his son. His talent had made him a billionaire, but his fear and trauma socially isolated him. He was still the love of her life, and the Father of their children. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath, preparing for the day. Charity was hard work, and there was never any point worrying about money in a country as generous as America. People who had a heart of charity had true class. Money can't buy class, nor can cursing the rich or poor. Perhaps there would be no class warfare if people remembered our common bond. There was always a money worker who took care of things when you had your heart and business straight.



Suddenly, terror froze her plan to go help the Veteran. She had left her iPad in the Uber car! She loved the driver, who was always gracious enough to correct her Spanish politely with plenty of tips on grammar. She had become so engaged in their conversation about Ybor City that she left her iPad on the front seat of his 1959 Ford F-150. Pedro had the most original Uber car in all the world, and it was always clean and in perfect repair. The robin's egg blue paint always shone perfectly, as did the white leather seats.

Lauren liked the beautifully polished 1959 high tech feel of an analog Ford F-150 with manual transmission, no air conditioning, hand crank windows, and AM radio gently playing Flamenco music. Pedro was always impeccably groomed, smelling of Old Spice and Magic Sizing used to starch his Mexican wedding shirt. She loved to hear him tell stories about what his wife was weaving. He had so much respect for the craft Consuela had carried through six generations to weave beautiful blankets from Alpaca wool. Consuela was also a retired instrumentation specialist. Pedro often joked that he married well, but Lauren knew how reverent he was of his wife. She felt lonelier wondering why she and Abraham hadn't stayed married.

With a comical whoosh, the Caregiver appeared in her bright lime colored medical scrubs, her wild shock of orange, curly hair buzzing past the clip used to keep it in a French twist, and a UF Gators face mask. Lauren could see her approach through the window to her front door. Who was this woman and how had she found her? The Caregiver stood back six feet and motioned calmly. She removed her knapsack slowly, so as not to disturb a Lady. She gingerly pulled the iPad out and pointed to a sticker,

“If Lost, Please Return to Helping Hands of Hillsborough.”

## Imagine All the People

Lauren laughed and blew her a kiss as she left the iPad by the front door and pivoted with a bounce in her step. She wondered what messages awaited her, but she didn't open the iPad in a rush to check as she usually did. She closed her eyes and said a prayer of thanks for good Samaritans everywhere.

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#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as New York City. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination, and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

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Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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The banking worker stumbled through the elevator, terrified to touch anything in the empty building. He had no hand sanitizer, and had forgotten some important files that he didn't know how to access on the Cloud. Entering the locked building to search for the physical files was a measure of last resort.

What was now on the Cloud was also in his brain, but his brain was totally in a fog. He hadn't forgotten the information, but the file in his brain was corrupted by months of social isolation. His children were living overseas. The bride of his youth had left him after their fourth child was born thirty years ago. He never wanted more than two children, and he now saw how cruel he was when she returned his seed with two more children. He missed them all terribly now.

He had never regretted telling her to leave with all their children years ago until now. He had only mocked her for her charity, reminding her that she would never make more money than him. She never talked back when he threatened her life if she tried to fight him for money. In retrospect, her actions spoke louder than her words. She took their children and left him once and for all the moment he cursed her very life. Maybe women didn't need money to live so much as men, because their arms opened wider. Maybe there was more to an economy besides money, like health, bartering, and goodwill. Maybe women didn't care about money as much as men, because their hearts were fuller. Maybe women lived longer than men for these very reasons.

## Imagine All the People

He felt more empty than he had when she walked away without molesting a red cent in their shared bank account many moons ago. He admired her on the Internet now, tone, radiant, and beautiful. She looked lovelier than when they first met at university almost fifty years ago. She reminded him of what his beautiful Mother tried to teach him years ago. Womankind's economic genius cannot be measured in dollars and cents. He had never understood that until now, and no amount of money could bring his Mother or the bride of his youth back right now. What could bring her back? He searched his memory banks of what his beautiful Mother tried to teach him to find an answer. He felt so alone as he considered the beautiful electronic images of the bride of his youth. She operated a charity in Tampa, and her smile radiated warmth through the Internet. He had not yet mustered the courage to complete her contact form from her web site. So it was for the banking worker, since he was used to having women in the office do everything for him.

To be sure, he excelled with the probabilities necessary to make successful trades. He excelled with what he called high level relationships with very wealthy people. What he had forgotten was The Law. The Law of his ancestors, taught in his youth was that respecting each person as an individual is the only high level relationship. Anything less was injustice, and anything more was idolatry. Holding men with money in higher esteem than one's own wife and children would always end in bankruptcy, eventually. It seemed America had forgotten that what was often financially profitable was spiritually and socially bankrupt. It seemed the Covid-19 pandemic was here to remind them of this fact.

Until now, he had thought of wining and dining billionaires as high level relationships. Now, he thought of his Secretary's morning conversations as an equally high level relationship. He had never considered that until now. She always remembered everything about his life, and he had taken that for granted as President. Today he realized the woman who served him as Secretary was more important than his own powers as President. He had not been able think properly without her warmth and competent service since the shutdown. He could not even get a call back from the Secretary who worked for him since 1983. She was busy taking care of her daughter and twin grandsons, born a few weeks before the shut down. He hoped those young men learned more than he had in almost seventy years of life.

He attempted to focus his mind on the location of the files as the elevator ascended to the penthouse suite overlooking the Hudson Bay. He lost focus every time the image of his dead cat, whom he had just found this morning amidst the dead ferns on his balcony, peeked through the aperture in his imagination. He had been in such a fog that he had neglected to water the plants, or let the cat in since his domestic workers walked away in April. No amount of money could get even his landscape worker to stay. The landscape worker kept the cat fed and happy, and the luscious hanging baskets beautiful. Now it was all dead, just as he realized he felt dead. He imagined the poor cat, starving to death, locked out of his luxury penthouse, while he was too consumed with panic over market forces to attend to this animal's needs. He was barely able to get take out, since no one answered the phone at the local bodega or pizzeria, and he didn't know how to use these apps that seemed to have replaced his administrative and support personnel overnight.

## Imagine All the People

The live cat had adopted him as he walked home from work one evening many years ago, darting out from the alley into the crepuscular rays of the sunset. She rubbed against his legs, weaving in and out of his limbs as he walked all the way home, feeling smug that the bride of his youth didn't want any money. She only wanted the divorce to be done. He reflected on how good a companion that butterscotch tabby cat had been all those years since his family scattered to the four winds. He had never even given her a name. He just called her cat. Now, when he tried to focus his mind on the live cat's purr and green eyes, all he could see were her slackened fur and decaying flesh, swarming with insects this desolate morning. He felt the bile come up in his throat as his mind's eye replayed the image over and over, despite his best effort to concentrate on the task at hand.

Suddenly, the elevator stopped and its doors whooshed open. He stepped into the office, which was almost too clean. Sterile. Empty. Organized. Controlled. His office lacked the human chaos necessary to create new order, thus he esteemed the empty office as having no value. The constant interruptions that had irritated him and infuriated him over the years would be so welcome now. Like the bride of his youth's womb he had thought to be a problem when he populated it with fruit years ago, so he now saw the room would be more valuable when it was once again populated with people working together. When the room was so empty, so barren, it was a tomb. He was suddenly terrified to be all alone here, without the hustle and bustle of people. He felt guilty for their absence, as he felt guilty for screaming at his wife for being pregnant years before. No bride of his youth. No children. No Secretary. No Janitor. No one. He shuddered to think at the mechanical relationships between money, mistresses, and mannequins he had bandied about over the years since his divorce. His memory of these hollow relationships made him feel more alone now.

## Imagine All the People

Searching through his files, he felt the terror of food insecurity he had known as a young child growing up in Brooklyn. He realized he had not eaten today. Suddenly, his brain froze with the confused signals to find the financial files and a pack of Lance Peanuts, a Clif Bar, anything to stabilize his low blood sugar.

With a fluorescent whoosh like a comical Zorro, the Caregiver appeared in her shock pink medical scrubs, kinky red hair, and bright orange paisley face mask. She had been running up and down the stairs for exercise for the past few weeks. No one knew how to open the fire escape door except her, but she kept that secret to herself. It was fun to have the run of many buildings she could hack into all over America, and she did no harm. She enjoyed dusting and cleaning in this penthouse suite as overcompensation for her crime. It was her way of resting, taking ownership of the empty space, and enjoying the panoramic view of the Big Apple. She could never understand why people paid good money to join a gym when they could just run around. People who were thought to be poor and without a vehicle were rich in ideas about how to keep healthy.

The banking worker gasped in shock and terror. The Caregiver slung her knapsack off her shoulders and pulled out what he thought would be a gun. He welcomed the opportunity to be killed immediately. He realized he had been dead inside for a long time. No one cared about him, except for to ask him for money. Children, neighbors, everyone acted like being a billionaire exempted a human being from the pain of life.

## Imagine All the People

Yet it did not. He remembered in tears the bride of his youth, who worked two jobs while she managed their entire family, who never complained when money was tight, and never grabbed money when it was loose. He prayed in that moment, as best he could recall from his Oma's teachings, for her and all their progeny. He closed his eyes as he stood, threw his wallet on the desk before the Caregiver, and put up his hands in surrender. No one in New York City accepted cash these days anyway, so it didn't much matter anymore if this woman took every last bill in his wallet.

He heard a thud, then opened his eyes. She was gone. In her stead, next to his wallet, was a brown bag lunch. That's what she retrieved from her knapsack, not a gun. The Caregiver always lived by the principle to spend, save, and share. Invest yourself well in your own health and the health of nations.

With a long sigh of relief, the banking worker enjoyed the homemade peanut butter and banana sandwich, carrot sticks, and dried figs the brown bag offered. As his blood sugar steadied, he retrieved the financial files he needed, then turned to a more important matter.

He completed the contact form on the bride of his youth's website. In that moment, he felt alive and invigorated, humbled and grateful for everything in his life. Fear had been replaced by power, love, and sound mind.

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#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy



## Imagine All the People

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as Spokane County. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination, and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

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Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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The Caregiver walked home from work through the parking lot, taking great care to keep off the grass. She noticed the Veteran waving people through the drive-through with his intense smile, wild gestures, and unique sense of style. She loved this Veteran from a safe social distance.

He rather looked like the 1970s version of Walt Disney's Goofy with his long salt and pepper pigtailed, shock pink Army camouflage fatigues he improvised from a kind Lady's donation. His intense yoga poses seemed terrifying to lookers on, but they failed to see the terror in his mind. His isometrics and poses made his frame sturdy, sinewy, and strong. They helped his mind from crashing completely. People thought him to be crazy for doing this in public, but the Caregiver thought America was crazy not to take a fitness tip from a Veteran. He was certainly half the size of most people waiting in their cars to order their meals. What they did not know was also his testimony, which he downloaded to her every time they met.

## Imagine All the People

Perhaps he was waving people through the McDonald's drive-through because he was hungry. Perhaps he was waving people through to show him how living off what was supplied to you rather than what you demanded was the better way. Perhaps he was simply enjoying the spiritual connection of people in an America that valued inanimate property more than people. People were his favorite Pets, and he meant no harm. He and the Caregiver were just alike this way. They meant no harm to cats and dogs, but people were the better company. After all, they were people too. Few people seemed to realize that these days. This is what all people on the margins have in common in a nation where margins are only known to be monetary in form and function. Breathing these imagination exercises downward toward the green grass, the Caregiver adjusted her parasol to block the brilliant, beautiful sunshine that pierced her like a bolt of lightning had years before.

## Imagine All the People

Bubba's huge Pirate hat was both elegant and scary looking, but it didn't scare the Caregiver. She knew the main purpose of this hat was to shield his blistered brain from the effects of bright sunlight. Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) was another bond they shared, which also made them refugees to their Puerto Rican and Florida homelands. They needed to be the human sunshine to attract the clouds God gave them to protect their hurting minds. Repeated blows to the head, witnessing trauma, and experiencing it will eventually separate a human mind from the general population. This is why we need specific ideas to treat and prevent CTE. Few understood the simplicity of brain health, and it seemed few cared. It was well. It was just another day in America for two people who chose to live in a better world, like Bubba and Alegría. The only way to live in a better world was make the best of what you had, and strive to become a better version of yourself every day. This was the Mamba Mentality Kobe Bryant left the world before his life was claimed too soon earlier this year.

She left him one of her spare meal cubes on the freshly cut green grass, and signaled him to come eat. Brown rice, steamed vegetables, tofu, and secret sauce made the magic. It was her last cube, and her stomach was rumbling. It was okay. She had finally taken the time to learn Apple Pay on her iPhone and someone had been kind enough to donate to her today. She never solicited donations, since it always felt like prostitution to her. America's Veterans are not a mink stole slung over her shoulders to attract Johns down on the boulevard. God always provided to those who gleaned in His fields. She had learned a long time ago to consider the lilies of the field more than the material gifts of man.

“Thank you, Alegría!” He blew her kisses and they made a warm sunshine socially distanced bear hug, as had been their tradition for years now. He always remembered exactly how she loved to be called, since his life started in Puerto Rico like hers. He didn’t care that her Spanish wasn’t perfect. He knew her desire to connect was pure. He pronounced her appellation beautifully and with gusto. She remembered exactly how he liked to be called too. Bubba. He assumed the nickname of his Alabama war buddy who was killed in Desert Storm decades ago. In his mind, it was just yesterday. Alegría understood this, and counted it all joy. She and Bubba served the same Master, and it was not the Department of Defense.

He wore Bubba’s 30 year old red bandana over his nose and mouth, making him look a bit adorable and dangerous. It was the same red bandana Bubba had constantly kept in his back pocket just in case, as any thinking Alabama country boy does. No matter if wearing Wranglers on liberty or combat fatigues, Bubba always kept a clean red bandana. It was the same red bandana the Veteran used to try to save Bubba’s life three decades ago. The Veteran never took it off, and washed it daily in Salvation Army’s utility sink.

## Imagine All the People

It didn't matter that she was freckled and fair and he was smooth and dark. In their conversations, they were just people living on Planet Earth who had Puerto Rican roots in common. In one of their many conversations made from a safe social distance in public places, the Veteran jumped for joy when she thanked him for his service. Most people did not understand that his Puerto Rican flag tattoo next to his Military ensign was a special symbol. Most people just thought of him as a dirty, homeless, crazy weirdo. The Caregiver knew he was a Veteran from reading his true colors, confirmed by his tattoo. The Caregiver did not need the bureaucracy necessary to most people to ask for a DD214, but it was a good idea before offering services. She could read their true colors. Clients came to her and she went to them. Free agency is the greatest employer on Planet Earth, and the Caregiver trusted God in all things to make her paths straight.

Puerto Rico, one of six United States territories, is not legally eligible to vote in national elections, but is subject to Selective Service. Like his father before him whose life was spent in Vietnam, this Hero did not wait for the draft. He answered God's call and volunteered for service before Desert Storm. His mind was spent somewhere between street fights to protect his Mother and siblings as the eldest whose father had been killed in action and ten years of his own Army service. The Caregiver was always the scientist, and never the judge. Did people really make choices on their own when all stimuli labeled all bad behavior as adult? Did free agency have a chance in a nation where wrong choices were constantly offered for less money than good choices? Was it nature or nurture that claimed his mind? It was both.

## Imagine All the People

She remembered well when beautiful Church bells rang in Puerto Rico from Old San Juan. She wondered if the bells would ever ring again on the mainland. It seemed that the cacophony of instant gratification had engulfed the beauty of delayed gratification. Sounds of blue ocean, birds chirping, and Church bells ringing in Old San Juan where most people walked were much nicer than the loud whoosh of traffic and bright lights on the mainland.

McDonald's was a beautiful brand. The golden arches seemed to embrace her as she stood in silent communication with her Hero at a safe social distance. He perceived her loving smile from beneath her mask, returned his, and she walked in to order a salad.

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#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as Jericho Road. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination, and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from any nation. It's simply from somewhere in the world.

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## Imagine All the People

Here is what was downloaded from the Collective Consciousness. We hope you enjoy this story. Here it goes.

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The legal worker stumbled around the office, furious and yelling words too sharp even to repeat. These words were so sharp and large in volume as to be off the charts.

This was not the first time the Caregiver had done this to him, yet he loved her still. After all, he had made a promise to both her parents. She was an orphan, and quite adorable in an incredibly exasperating way. She reminded him more of his late Mother than a six year old child. Somehow she always got her way in every legal argument, against his best advice, rejecting his every appeal with such resolve as to cause his sinewy body to collapse with exhaustion after the task was complete. Their relationship was defined by how the Caregiver dominated his mind, even being quite junior to him by at least thirty years.

With the stroke of a pen and a few phone calls, the legal worker obeyed the Caregiver's command to transfer ownership of the vast portfolio of money, property, and the diamond mines Aunt Brownie had left in her trust to the new parents she adopted, to be administrated entirely to the United Negro College Fund. Of course, the legal worker thought the entire matter was quite insane, but he held himself true to his principles. Attorneys advise and clients decide.

Large and looming in his mind also was his younger brother, who unlike the Caregiver's Daddy, had returned home from the war alive but not entirely well. He had only stopped abusing his body with drugs and alcohol when he entered Howard University, which was considered quite insane for a white person to do at the time.

The Caregiver knew the truth. She had not been put here on Planet Earth to listen to all this crazy talk about the wealth in diamond mines across the ocean. She had plenty of Diamond Minds here in the diamond shaped city called Washington, DC. She knew the truth of the Diamond Minds from her favorite television show. It was the only television show for which she would sit perfectly still and watch from beginning to end. The show could have been three hours long, or three minutes long. The Caregiver didn't know or care to measure time, or money. The Caregiver soaked in every bit of this show emanating from the littly Sony UHF/VHF television set with tin foil on its rabbit ear antennae. The Caregiver agreed with its analysis of the Diamond Minds. The United Negro College Fund. Because. The. Mind. Is. A. Terrible. Thing. To. Waste. Here were the Diamond Minds in which she would invest! She was quite sure of herself and would stop at nothing to make this important legal and financial decision.



After the legal worker finished calling, signing, and filing the papers as the Caregiver requested, he had collapsed on the sofa across from his desk. As usual, he felt more spent after an hour with the Caregiver than with a week in front of a Supreme Court Judge. Apparently, the Caregiver had, as she had done before as he slumbered on the couch, emptied all his liquor bottles, rinsed them, and replaced their contents with water. Peering out the picture window behind the desk, he noticed the contents of his cigar box chopped up and daintily placed in the neatly arranged beds of the common flower garden outside the quaint old office building. Tobacco was a natural pesticide, as the Caregiver reminded him many times. He was frustrated, but not furious any more. He felt duty bound, if not a little disturbed to note that he was the only one on Planet Earth that understood the child and could help her. No one else did. She had left him a little note, again a fish drawn with one fell swoop of her little left hand, which reminded him to quit stewing over her piracy of his alcohol and tobacco supply and walk down the street for a luncheon of fish, rice, and vegetables. The legal worker resisted the urge to order a double martini, and went back to the office to nap instead.

Meanwhile, the Caregiver walked in steady pace, happy and calm with her decision. It was time to be with Mommy and Daddy again, but she would have to be careful as not to endanger them. She knew from years of experience how people were far more comfortable with war than love in Washington, DC. She knew she was the outsider in this neighborhood, as Mommy and Daddy were outsiders in other neighborhoods. It was okay. She knew she was black and beautiful on the inside. On the outside, she was weird, white, and moved by night.

## Imagine All the People

It was all good, as the beautiful people inside the prisons said. She heard this when she looked at their true colors dancing from the razor wire atop the electric fence outside the prison. The Caregiver knew the truth and lived by the motto her favorite TV show taught.

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#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

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## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver was finally forced to take a break required by law. The Caregiver often did not take breaks, since it seemed so bureaucratic. When running a blue streak, June bugging around our Republic caring for people, breaks were not a straight line. They were more of a figure eight, meant to be taken just when the body demanded them. The Caregiver well knew when the body needed to shut down, and often got into trouble for not clocking out for some puny 30 minute unpaid meal break and 2 paid 15 minute breaks. Why couldn't the Caregiver just check out when the body demanded? Why weren't there more Caregivers? Many hands make light work, and as long as hands were few, the Caregiver would run the game in a way best for the group.

The Caregiver had been in a fantastic amount of trouble throughout life, but that was okay. An awareness comforted the Caregiver that what seemed like trouble and danger to others was just a necessary force for change. Like a short, sharp shock of lightning is attracted to tin metal rooves, trouble was quite attracted to the Caregiver, and in turn trouble was quite attractive to the Caregiver, giving a more abundant source of data for duty. The Caregiver was the computer, recording every experience with precise detail. Most people thought the Caregiver was insane and stupid, but the Caregiver thought the same of them too in a quiet, loving way. Listening to those roaming the streets experiencing houselessness confirmed that their general preference for range free living was quite superior to the false security of life in a gilded cage. Atlanta City Jail was better than the Watergate Condo for the Caregiver, since its residents were smarter and kinder. The Caregiver had run a blue streak trying to get back there, but no crime committed would lead the path back into jail. The Caregiver stole food as a child, but never went to jail like the beautiful people did. Perhaps ugly people weren't allowed in prison. Only beautiful people got locked up, because their beauty was coveted.

## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver saw everyone's true colors. Everyone was beautiful, but beautiful people did ugly things because they did not perceive their own beauty and the beauty in others. One day everyone would be able to see their own true colors without hearing maddening static inside their own mind, just like the Caregiver had learned to perceive. Cleaning came naturally to the Caregiver, since it was something ugly and stupid people could do quite well, and so clean the doors of their own perception. Truly the Caregiver never saw anyone as stupid and ugly, but was keenly aware that others did. Their words went in straight lines with beautiful images emblazoned on signs, but the sorry excuse of an economy spoke in contrary actions. Non-prophet. The Caregiver was not any kind of prophet, which was perfect. Money as it was had only been a burden and a wild attractant of danger to the Caregiver. The Caregiver belonged to the non-prophet. Titles and loud proclamations of being the prophet were nervous.

It just wasn't fair. Other people went to jail that the Caregiver didn't believe should really be there, even if they committed the crime. The Caregiver believed some type of technology and an economy of compassion and mutual guarantee was a better fix than prison. The Caregiver had learned to hate and unlearned it again by accepting life inside the body as an LWOP sentence. While the Caregiver had not broken the law in many years, no fear of imprisonment was in the body. The Caregiver welcomed punishment as a way to please The Master. Prison was a place the Caregiver might learn to read faster. So it didn't much matter. Books never learned the Caregiver a thing in the world about The Master of the Universe. Experience and service did.

## Imagine All the People

The time to open wider was when times went down. The time to be scrunched up was never. The time to snap shut came too, but only to protect the flowers. The Caregiver took boundless joy from being wide open most of the time. Eternally open for business, the Caregiver received criticism frequently. No country that burdens unpaid Caregivers has a work ethic, so quietly the Caregiver didn't want to hear a critique about work ethic. The Caregiver regarded life as a living sacrifice to prove the point. The Caregiver considered the work a branch of engineering. People hated politics because they believed government fixed things until they were broken, but in reality the Caregiver knew everything was a branch of engineering, including politics. Engineers break things until they are fixed, so if breaking the body against the sorry excuse of an economy helped to break the system, then the Caregiver counted it all joy. The beautiful people broke the laws to fix the system, even though it was tragic when other people got hurt. It was sad that no one listened, and only changed the law after several decades or centuries of violence. No one asked the Caregiver, because they thought the brain in the body was completely worthless. The Caregiver saw everyone's true colors and really knew how to keep the game moving. Breaking everything until it was fixed was the game.

The Caregiver had been through many economic tsunamis, and had no preference for dumpster diving to living in a luxury flat. In sum, the Caregiver knew duty called far above comfort. Often the Caregiver was complimented for unstoppable energy, personable manner, and willingness to work extra shifts. Often the Caregiver was disciplined for hiding in a maintenance closet to catch a cat nap that might go on for an hour. The Caregiver was often three to fifteen minutes late by established rules. The Caregiver took the punishment quite cheerfully, submitting to authority and overcompensating for the crime by working 24 hour shifts. Like everyone on Planet Earth, the Caregiver did the best with resources available.

This shift had gone particularly well, and the Caregiver learned an interesting fact. Turtles respiration through their rear-ends. Who knew? How could this valuable information be used to improve life for everyone on Planet Earth? Deep in thought, the Caregiver carried along toward the hospital exit with the lunchbox always overpacked with extra food. Suddenly everything upstairs went into orbit as often happened within the Caregiver's beautiful mind. Popeye penetrated the aperture of the Caregiver's imagination. Then spinach. Popeye liked spinach. Popeye was a Sailor Man.

Or was he? Who was Popeye really? Why didn't Popeye's Chicken serve raw spinach instead? Why did people get shot with guns working there? Were there any turtles near by the murder scene? How was their rear-end respiration activated by the gun violence? Did they respirate only through their rear end or were there olfactory sensors there too? What about the breathing apparatus that appeared on the face? Who knows what all the nose does in the Turtle Family. Did they lose control of their breathing? Did turtles eat food from Popeye's Chicken? Did they enjoy the smells of crackling flesh fried in heavy grease with spices wafting from the drive-through? Would they prefer more gentle odors from baked birds or some type of tofu bird? Were they terrified of being eaten if no chicken was available? Not much. Turtles knew just to keep going and count it all joy, just like the Caregiver.

Was Popeye in close proximity to turtles at any point in life? Did he ever turn to raw spinach instead of canned spinach? Did he know frozen spinach could be steamed into a tasty side dish with garlic and had more food value than canned spinach? Where were the nearest turtles to be observed? Perhaps a litter clean up at a local park on tomorrow's day off was in order to gather data. The Caregiver was confident that a great many turtles would be happy to communicate on these matters. In fact, the entire Turtle Family would appreciate being consulted as though their lives truly mattered. Turtles knew a great deal about life on Planet Earth, and only made progress by sticking their necks out, just like a Caregiver.

Suddenly the Caregiver caught the heel of the shoe into some grease and went skidding along until a Sailor crashed into the lunchbox held in the right hand. The left hand was always free to help all the beautiful people first. The Sailor, impeccably groomed and polite, caught the Caregiver and the lunch box. “I’ve seen you. You’re that special one.” Oh no. The Caregiver hated being called out for being special. It usually meant a good hard beating was soon to come. Those beatings had been a long time ago by a straight line measure, but they sometimes circled back to the Caregiver’s broken heart made whole with a higher love. It was hard to know what that word meant. The word “special” usually felt more insulting than being called retarded, since all the beautiful people on Planet Earth were so very special. However, this time the word “special” felt like a warm blessing and a beautiful prayer. Special. Yes, the Caregiver had a private definition of special that was a secret source of pride for all the pain and misery life’s journey brings us all. Special. The Caregiver’s life had equal life to a CEO’s life. The Caregiver knew how special everyone on Planet Earth truly is, since true colors were more easily read than words moving left to right.



## Imagine All the People

The Sailor had a turtle pinned to the collar that seemed to have a special meaning. Its shiny bronze metal refracted the light and made an effervescent rainbow. True colors. Like the crepuscularity of a sunset, the little turtle reminded the Caregiver that weeping would only endure for a night. Joy comes in the morning. The Caregiver pulled away and stood at a safe social distance of six feet, hands still covered in sanitary gloves purchased with personal funds, and a hijab that may have been arranged in an unorthodox way to cover the nose and mouth. The Caregiver took great pride in cleaning and personal grooming habits, knowing how to arrange these methods whether houseless or living in the group home. The Caregiver preferred to be covered, since being judged crazy with the cover was nicer than being called ugly, stupid, retarded, and special without the hijab. It pleased The Master, and the Caregiver learned a long time ago no one could serve two masters. The hijab helped the Caregiver learn how to retard food spoil, a proper use of the word retarded. It was quite good for food rot to be retarded with actions that spoke louder than words. Words hurt really bad. Baseball bats hurt too. Horrible things hurt too. The Caregiver never told anyone how much, since the colors didn't exist and the Caregiver was in no shape to explain it all over again to another charity worker. The words didn't ever match any of the colors anyway. It didn't much matter anymore. Even the hurt helped the Caregiver see true colors shining through.

## Imagine All the People

The Sailor seemed special too. What was on the Sailor's head? Was it a hijab? Had the Sailor ever seen turtles breathing through their back end? How could this help everyone? Did the Sailor have any lunch? Silently and sweetly the Caregiver offered the Sailor the lunchbox. Being born on the soil where hijabs were regularly worn, the Sailor knew that to refuse a gift could truly injure someone. Plus the Sailor was very hungry, although concerned the Caregiver had no other food. Little did the Sailor know what a brilliant economist the Caregiver was, but those healed by the Caregiver knew. Those whose souls had passed into the eternal database of true colors knew very well. They combined with the Caregiver's imagination that everyone was a genius, especially the Turtle Family. The encounter impregnated the sacred space between memory and experience called imagination that perhaps the beautiful people would welcome the Caregiver into prison to discuss the connections between turtles, spinach, guns, and health. The Caregiver saw more beautiful colors refracting from the razor wire than almost anywhere else on Planet Earth. Why were they there? What were they growing behind that fence? It must be quite a garden, in the Caregiver's imagination. Just the idea of it brought such amazing grace and joy. It made all the punishment the Caregiver endured worth more than diamonds and dollar bills.

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#planetearth #ourhome #unity #generosity #empathy

The following is one report of today's activities on Planet Earth. We have a general idea of the location as Spokane County. This is a Fig Newton of the Imagination, and does not purport to be an official 23:59 report from the United States of America.

## Imagine All the People

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The law enforcement worker was having a devil of a time. It seemed people left and right were still texting and driving, which was unbelievable given the global Coronavirus pandemic and other looming health crises in our nation.

The law enforcement worker was a Navy Veteran in addition to being a volunteer religious worker. Often mocked and ridiculed by some on the force, the law enforcement worker stayed true to the principles proven by generations. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The Golden Rule was not whoever had the gold makes the rules. The Golden Rule is a yardstick by which we are all measured.

## Imagine All the People

The law enforcement worker had been harassed for reporting some on the force for being improper with chewing gum. Smacking it while speaking with others and spitting it on the ground was unacceptable. It was a poor example for our youth. It was out of context. The law enforcement worker reported their crude behavior and comments when assisting a live birth on the side of I-90. The law enforcement worker had a bit of a headache and had not slept well the night before. Irritated beyond all measure, the law enforcement worker pulled over the strange looking car where a person was visibly texting in the driver's seat.

Upon approaching the window from a safe distance of six feet, the law enforcement worker was arrested by the entertainment worker's beauty. The law enforcement worker's innards jumped from heart to hamstring. Magical was the moment when the entertainment worker spoke calmly and stated the case. The law enforcement worker was completely hamstrung by stunning beauty.

"I come forward, Officer Infinity. I know self-driving cars are illegal in Washington State. I am willing to pay the penalty to get to my destination. Please forgive me, but I don't expect special treatment. I came here from California as a volunteer health care worker."

Locked in a bubble of effervescent joy, Officer Infinity spoke in an atypical manner. Normally rational and calm, now Officer Infinity was emotional and off kilter.

In that sacred space between memory and experience called imagination, Officer Infinity recalled viewing images of the entertainment worker on several movies offered by discerning elders in the orphanage. Officer Infinity could barely breathe. Not only was the entertainment worker physically stunning, the spiritual qualities of volunteer religious work and reported adoption of a child touched Officer Infinity. This entertainment worker was known as a generous soul, who cared about everyone, especially the orphaned and widowed.

“May I please escort you to your destination?”, Officer Infinity asked nervously.

The entertainment worker, delighted by the offer, kindly counter-offered. “How about you join us for a virtual supper later this evening?” Officer Infinity could not imagine which religious workers would be there. Officer Infinity wondered what to wear. Would the clothes on hand be good enough or was shopping in order? Could [Amazon](#) deliver in two hours? Not yet. All the local stores were closed. Drones were not available here yet. Spokane had so much less than Seattle in one sense, but so much more in another. The clothes on hand were clean and pressed. They would have to do.

A virtual supper had been the last meal Officer Infinity enjoyed with a Navy Comrade who had recently overdosed on opioids. The Comrade’s deadly pleasure from the narcotics was preferred to pain from years of commuting three hours one way to a VA clinic from rural Indiana with an amputated left leg and blindness in the right eye. It was hopeful even to consider that this last supper in the sacred space between experience and memory called imagination could be overwritten with a new experience. A new virtual supper.

## Imagine All the People

“That would be my privilege. Thank you. I will issue you a warning for using an electric car in Washington State. I am not sure the black and white of this issue. It may be a grey area of the law.”

The entertainment worker remarked how lovely it was to be in Spokane, with its slower pace and friendly faces. Hopefully a government worker would make self driving cars legal here soon. Hopefully a charity worker could help everyone have safe transportation. Hopefully everyone would enjoy the same grace for obeying the spirit of the law, if not its letter.

Hope is a necessary ingredient, as President Obama taught the world. Yet hope is not a strategy. Using our power and privilege to empower and engage others is always the best strategy.

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#globalstandards #optimism #smallworld #VetSafe #neighbors

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## Imagine All the People

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The Caregiver considered Daddy, who always warmed the aperture in the imagination with a sudden burst of energy. The Caregiver considered Mommy, who warmed the heart 24/7. Daddy was killed during a holiday festival somewhere in the world in 1968. Mommy said no one would listen to wisdom. A lot of people made fun of the holiday. A lot of people didn't care about the holiday or the land or the people. They just kept not caring and making a mockery of things until Daddy went boom saving everybody else's life. Daddy didn't call them by the same mean words as those whose lives he saved. Daddy called them Neighbors. The others called them by awful words. Daddy tried to convince them to kill those words and save people. No one listened, so Daddy died in Vietnam before the Caregiver was ever born. Boom. Wisdom speaks. Boom. Why couldn't wisdom speak a different language than boom? The Caregiver could never understand. Maybe people needed a new language. It seemed the same thing was happening even now today, somewhere else in the world. Boom. Bombs bursting in air. Where were the gardens? Maybe the turtles could explain something. People just weren't smart like the Turtle Family, as the Caregiver saw things.

Mommy had to check into the Ocean with Daddy's guns. It was an understood thing to the Caregiver. Sometimes people just had to check out of form and it really wasn't their fault. It was everybody's fault that life functioned that way still. Still, it hurt. The Caregiver knew that life would be different from most at school when the nuts from the L shaped tool called the Caregiver and demanded their freedom. The Caregiver responded, with Neighbor fast asleep drunk on the plastic bean bag in the corner of the single wide's living room. The Caregiver had gotten Neighbor to sleep imagining what Daddy would say. The Caregiver removed the bottle from Neighbor's hands and rubbed the forehead in tiny, gentle circles. "Be a brave soldier, Sir. Be a brave soldier, Sir. Fall out. Fall out."

Upon confirmation of the Neighbor's slumber, the Caregiver darted to the knife drawer where the nuts in the L shaped tool kept calling methodically and rhythmically in steady thumps. The Caregiver could hear the colors very precisely as they danced from the drawer. The Caregiver grasped the short, wide part of the L with the right hand. With the left hand, the Caregiver pressed the button and removed the nut case. What kind of nut case keeps such a tool in the kitchen, the Caregiver wondered?



Colors danced and sounds thumped in vibrating harmonics until the Caregiver knew almost exactly what to do. The nuts beat in steady rhythm their exact message. Give me liberty or I will cause death. With a swiftly tailored motion and an explosive action of the left hand moving quickly down the long part of the L, the Caregiver used the left thumb to push the switch up. It didn't work. The fleshy web between left thumb and forefinger were caught in a sudden snap of the slide's action. Perfectly still and breathing deeply, the Caregiver heard the nut calling still. Colors danced in deep greens and blues and any color they might choose to advance the Caregiver's imagination toward the goal of setting this nut free to save the Soldier. Soldier Neighbor Sir had not been well, but it seemed no one cared except some people in the trailer park. Sir had been sick with drink and smoke for a long time, so the Caregiver just skipped school and took duty of him most days. People didn't miss the Caregiver, and that was okay.

The Caregiver didn't like being at school anyway, separated from the general population. Special. The Caregiver was supposed to go to the special classroom, not the general classroom where all the beautiful people were, but the special ones. Special like Special K. Flaky. Crunchy. Lacking nutrition. Suffocated inside a plastic bag and locked down into a box. Special.

## Imagine All the People

More often than not the Caregiver wandered off to communicate with the maintenance technicians at the water treatment plant, janitors, and Turtle Families at the water tower colored like a box of Ralston Purina mix. It was a candy cane full of life for all people in the Caregiver's colorful imagination. The Candy Cane Water Tower with Ralston Purina clothes made the Caregiver so happy. The Caregiver would sit on the cool grass underneath its shade and wonder how many candy canes could provide water for everyone in the world. The Caregiver loved to communicate it to the maintenance workers and the Turtle Families working there. They welcomed the Caregiver's ideas, where others showed their true colors that the very presence of the Caregiver was a complete source of anxiety. It was okay. People didn't have to like the Caregiver. The Caregiver saw their true colors and loved them from a safe distance.

## Imagine All the People

The Candy Cane Water Tower in Ralston Purina clothes showed its true colors in sweet harmonics. The fleshy web almost matched the Ralston Purina colors. Red water dripped from the fleshy web freely, but it was okay. The Caregiver was perfectly calm. The Caregiver couldn't even recall the word for the red water dripping from the left hand, but it didn't much matter. It seemed to rhyme with mud. The right hand performed an immediate action to free the flesh with the thumb flashing up quickly to lock the slide on the tool. The copper nut fell out and the Caregiver caught it gingerly in the left hand, ensuring not to awaken Sir Soldier Neighbor nor to get red water on the nut. And with that, the Caregiver knew that life would be different since unloading the first semi-automatic gun to save someone along life's journey. Nature made everyone special. Nurture did more so. The Caregiver learned that if a person worked hard enough, they could be perfectly invisible. The Caregiver was well disguised as the invisible man in all situations. Cloaked in Daddy's freckled face and fair skin with variegated shades of gold, red, white, and eyes of blue, the Caregiver was the invisible man in Mommy's beautiful black shape. Special. Yes. Everyone was special.

The Caregiver learned that the assigned sex would never produce life like other people. Babies were for the unique, beautiful people. Nut dispensers were for special people, which was a kinder word than retarded. The Caregiver would only be able to give life by taking care of the sick people's nut dispensers. Ugly and stupid people should not have children, as the Caregiver heard many times.

## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver took duty of the proper resources and nursed the left hand with hydrogen peroxide in the little bathroom. The Caregiver knew to take everything apart, scrub each part clean of filth, then put it all back together again. Daddy taught this as field stripping, a protocol that evolved in the Caregiver's imagination for each situation. This way Soldier Sir Neighbor could find everything in the little bathroom even without the left arm and right eye when the Caregiver communicated the colors to awaken him gently before leaving the tidy little trailer haus. The Caregiver knew the way to take ownership of things was to keep them clean. Money didn't make much sense to the Caregiver, but cleaning products did. Bathed in a little hydrogen peroxide, then wrapped in some gauze, the ripped left hand was good to go. Like a womb gives life, the wound on the fleshy web on the left hand promised to save lives. The wound offered a lot of hope, and a solid strategy. Now the Caregiver had to get the nuts out of there and replace the L shaped tool, since that would make Sir feel safer. Void of its ammunition, the gun has less power to harm people. The other guns had been hauled out the back door to Neighbor's haus. The Neighbor was very helpful, and understood to lock these guns up until the other Neighbor got home, and Sir felt much better. Nobody wanted to steal from Sir his weapons. Everybody wanted to return to Sir his health. The Caregiver knew that the perception of safety was likely more important to people than the reality of safety. Guns made people feel safer than trust, which was kind of sad.

## Imagine All the People

Trust made people safer in reality, when other people were trustworthy. This was a square deal. They could still play with the L shapes sometimes, but not to go boom and kill people. These L shaped tools called guns were one thing, but they were not everything. The Caregiver wondered about why people went to jail for them and with them. True colors called that people responded to fear with love or hate. Love was the better way. Guns weren't bad, but they were tools meant for a different day. Today was a new day, and the Caregiver was confident that Sir Soldier Neighbor would see the gun in the knife drawer and never know the Caregiver had stolen its ammunition to save his life. It was just a nut dispenser to the Caregiver, and it would be replaced one day after a thorough cleaning. Like a Pez candy dispenser, guns and ammunition had their place in time. However, they were not wonderful like the unique, beautiful people. All people were unique and beautiful, even the ones thought to be ugly and stupid. Special. Everyone was special in the greatest sense of the word. Each one of these unique, beautiful people was so highly prized and unique in the Caregiver's eyes. Such began a good journey with call and response. True colors always called the Caregiver to respond properly. Master speaks silently through true colors. Anything else is just too much noise.

Depositing the nut dispenser in the little knapsack stocked full of other nuts, including but not limited to, a phrase the Caregiver learned in school detention, dry roasted & boiled peanuts, pistachios, cashews, almonds, and a few NATO rounds to deposit into the Neighbors' gun bank. Lovely Neighbor refreshed the Caregiver's supply of boiled peanuts in the little round, green Tupperware container. What a square deal. The Caregiver was absolutely delighted to trade the deadly nuts for the lively nuts.

## Imagine All the People

The Caregiver sent the colors to the beloved Soldier Neighbor Sir. His sleepy eyes fluttered a bit. Approaching him slowly with no sudden motions, the Caregiver kissed his forehead sweetly and whispered, “Supper.” Sir smiled dreamily and sagged deeper into the shock pink plastic bean bag as the Caregiver turned off the window unit air conditioner and opened the jalousie windows to welcome the tenderness of sunset marinating the little home with the welcome promise of cool air. The Caregiver donned the oven mitts and pulled the Hamburger Helper from the little oven, scrubbed clean with vinegar. The Caregiver had taken great care to doctor it up with peppers and onions from the garden, responding to the true colors who called how to combine everything safely to make a healthy meal.

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The background of the entire page is a light blue gradient. Overlaid on this is a faint, semi-transparent image of two hands, one from the left and one from the right, cupping a heart shape in the center. The hands and heart are rendered in a slightly darker shade of blue, creating a subtle watermark effect.

# *Veteran Caregiver of Veterans*

I'm Heidi Christensen, and this collection and our good work is dedicated to my late husband, Mr. Raymond D. Christensen, who served honorably in the United States Navy during the Korean War. Without the Veteran, we have nothing. Ray knew this, and went out of his way to include all Veterans. He embraced change while holding steadfast to eternal principles. A lifetime member of the VFW and American Legion, he was also connected with the VA throughout his life and encouraged other Veterans to connect. We both share the hope that one day we will send young people around the world to build a global infrastructure, not to kill one another. Objective The objective is to save lives locally and nationally through non-medical caregiving. We apply ourselves locally, and inspire others to do their Heidi Duty nationally. Please find free respite care resources from the Elizabeth Dole Foundation's Hidden Heroes: Register for Free Services with Hidden Heroes It is not enough to define a narrow scope of duties in Veteran caregiving. Whereas Veterans have given everything of their lives and their time, Caregivers must also be willing to give more of their time within the scope of the law. Who We Serve Veterans under age 30 are our focus, but all Veterans are eligible for the services.