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Finding Color

During our time together, I felt we were meant to be permanent fixtures in each other’s lives. When I would talk with her, blacks seemed shades lighter than they were before. Even white would become brighter. I felt a deep connection with this girl. After she left, everything went back to black and white. I missed our conversations of a different life. Even the mysterious shades of what I came to call ‘gray’ vanished from my view. Each morning, I drank my coffee, hoping the black fluid would revitalize me enough that I could feel something of life again. I would hop in the shower and let the clear fluid wash my pain away. I prayed each morning the hot water would break my body apart leaving blackened glutinous particles that could fit down the drain. My body flowing through the pipes, a decimated version of itself following the water, unable to resist the current, until finally exiting into the void of the ocean where I would be consumed by a creature and turned into its excrement. Each day I would be disappointed when my prayers weren’t answered. My job that before slightly entertained me, held no interest to me, aside for a place to make money to keep living my mundane life. Had she stayed and kept up our conversations, I would probably have been fine staying there. Instead, I noticed I was slowly trudging toward a death I didn’t want. I began looking for an escape from my life. I used my phone to begin sending my resume to places that resembled where I was working. A white page with black ink shows little of who the person is that sent it, but anything is better than nothing. My dreams held vibrant glimpses of another life in another time. One morning, as I began to get ready for work, I began to think about the conversations her and I had about our black and white world and imagining there was more to it than that. I remember that was the first time I started seeing the abstract color ‘gray.’ How I missed it. Just remembering the first time I saw it, the way black and white next to it seemed to pop even more than usual, adding texture and life to an otherwise droll table. It was at this point I had realized I had run out of coffee, the last straw that fell on my metaphorical back. I snapped, smashing my coffee pot and throwing my white mug against the wall, the ceramic exploding against the motivational quote I hung on the wall. The picturesque visual was a juxtaposition to what I felt inside, so much so, it shocked me. I stepped forward, entranced by the chaos I had just released upon my world, and onto some broken glass. The stabbing pain I felt travelled from my foot to my head in a heartbeat. I screamed, falling to the floor and grabbing my foot. Blood already began seeping out like thick oil, becoming a viscous circle surrounding me. I cried out, for the pain radiating from my foot, for the void left in my heart, but most of all, for the disappointment I called my life. The tears streamed down my face as I sat in a fetal position. I screamed for answers, to nothing and everything, to no one, to everyone. But there was no answer, much like I knew there wouldn’t be. I awoke several hours later and cleaned the remnants of my tantrum. The white light on my phone indicated a missed call and several text messages from work. A flashing reminder that I was late for my life that I hated. It’s funny, come in early and not a single thank you. Late one time and they can’t wait to write you up. I ignored their attempts to contact me and went back to bed. The next day, I awoke feeling worse than I had previously felt. The white light on my tiny phone angrily flashed; ‘Missed Calls’ and ‘Text Messages’ ominously glowed, demanding I reply. The weight of the accessory was something I couldn’t handle at that moment. I let it slip from my hand, letting it land face down. I did nothing to pick it back up, instead I stepped over it and left. The next few hours I spent wandering the city and looking at the buildings. The contrast of the tinted black windows on the concrete buildings left me feeling devoid of energy. I sat on a bench and dropped my sight to street level and saw the white faces on the black bodies walking past. I noticed they all seemed to carry excess weight on their shoulders, or that was how it looked. They all seemed to carry these chains around their necks; attached to a white screened ball in their hands they were afraid to look away from. It was scary realizing they couldn’t look away from their handheld prisons. I could hear my own ball and chain calling me back to my domicile to retrieve it and continue with my prison sentence I was handed when I graduated from school. I had to escape, from my small hovel with shower, from the zombies and their hypnotizing screens, from this concrete prison. I ran to the edge of town and continued on until I vomited, then ran some more. My eyes began to lose focus, the black and white started to blur around me, meshing together and forming my lost ‘gray.’ I don’t remember when, but I blacked out. When I awoke, my lungs and legs were sore, but there was a new sound. The rhythmic sound of shoes stepping on the pavement was replaced with faint melodic splashing. The unforgiving concrete that previously had been painful on my feet was now a softened soil that gave as I turned and moved. A warmth had blanketed me while a cool breeze casually blew across my face. Then, something wet lapped the side of my face; once, twice. I opened my eyes to find a large, wet, snout attached to a white tongue ready to lick my face again. Pushing away, I saw a gray dog happily pushing to lick me again. His slobber already covering half my face, I pushed him off me and got to my feet. I looked around, but there was no one in sight. No footsteps to show how I had got there, or from which way. The soil at my feet didn’t feel like the dirt I had in my plants in my hovel. I’d read about this substance on my phone before, it was called sand. This felt like soft sparkling, larger-than-dust particles, separately, but in a pile, it would compact and form a ground to walk on. The moment I stepped off the area, other particles would fall where I stepped as if I had never been there. The dog jumped at me licking me and barking, as if greeting another of his kind. I was curious about the crashing sound, so I headed toward the sound. The dog chased after me, running further on and waiting for me to reach where he stood then continuing ahead. He wasn’t bothering me, and the company was welcoming, so I didn’t try to chase him off. We eventually came to the sound of the crashing. The black devoid ocean I previously dreamed of becoming a part of crashed against the sand. The sound both enticing me to join in its chaotic splashing fun and warning me of its relentless strength. The dog sprinted to the water. I shouted for him to stop and be careful, but he continued forward. A wave built energy, becoming larger as the dog ran into the water. I chased after him, yelling for him to stop, hoping he would hear me before the monstrous wave pulled him down and didn’t let go. It was no use, the dog leapt into the giant wave. The water crashed down, spraying everywhere. I stood at the edge of the water searching for the dog. But the waves crashed in front of me and he was nowhere to be seen. I was deeply hurt. The first friend I had made in this new place ended up dying as quickly as I had met him. I shouted at the wave building in front of me, demanding it return my new friend. The wave continued to grow larger, reaching its zenith mere feet in front of me. I was no longer looking at a wave smaller than me, I was now looking at a wall of water larger than any building I had seen before. I turned to run and was shocked to see my gray friend running toward me. I was surprised to see him, until I noticed he was not stopping. The dog lunged at me, crashing into my chest and hurling me into a wave. I rolled under water in the current for what felt like hours. My lungs, still sore from running earlier, strained for air but there was none to be had. My mouth opened, hoping for that sweet gas to enter my body. It was instead met with fluid, immediately filling my orifice and travelling to my innards. When I came to, I was out of the water and back on the sand. My lungs forgave me for their recent torrent by breathing in more of the tantalizing air. My companion licked my face, and I noticed his eyes were a different shade of gray than I had noticed before. I grabbed his face and stared into his eyes. It was unlike anything I had ever seen before. A serene, calming shade stared back, a question for another time. Turning to the water I was left in a shocked state. I rubbed my eyes, thinking my hallucination would dissipate. Instead, the abnormal blurry shade became lucidly clear. The water looked the same way the dog’s eyes looked, only darker. What was I staring at? How did this happen? I looked toward the sky, hoping for some sort of answer, but to my surprise, the sky was a lighter shade of this hallucination. The sand still had its white and gray hue to it, thankfully. I doubt I would have been able to handle the ground I was standing on to have transformed as well. Staring out at the ocean, what I first thought was phantasmal, seemed natural. I sat watching the waves crashing, my new companion sitting next to me watching them as well. After several minutes of pondering on the name of this new shade I couldn’t think of a word that could describe what I was seeing. Instead I thought of four words that seemed to fit together. Breathtaking, Lively, Unique, Ethereal. However, that seemed like too long of a name for what I beheld. So I decided to use the first letters of each word to describe it, Blue. As I said the word aloud, the waves crashed louder, as if agreeing with the name.

I spent a week embracing this new experience in perception. It turned out there were more shades of this ‘blue’ than I thought possible. Not only that, the shades of ‘gray’ were becoming more vivid and the blacks and whites were less visible. I was playing with my new friend, Blue, when I saw a figure approaching. Even with the person coming toward me from so far off, the outline was familiar. Her eyes were now a vibrant blue with gray striations throughout the irises. Stopping in front of me, my conversational companion smiled, her creases reaching her eyes.

We sat on the sand and I began telling her how I had come to this place I was now at. About how my new friend, Blue, had shown me a new world vibrant with a beauty I would never have beheld had I stayed chained to my old life. It was at that point, that my old friend stood and offered her hand to me.

“You’ve only begun on your journey,” she said.

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“This world is full of vibrant colors, more than just this one you see now.”

“Colors?” The odd word felt attractive on my tongue.

“Blue is a guide sent to get you started on your quest to see the multiple colors of the rainbow.” Another word alien to me but full of life. “Are you ready?” She asked.

I took her hand, “Yes, show me more.”

I walked with my two friends as they led me to my new life.