

The Time Police stood up and stretched his arms and legs. "We think we've had enough of sitting around and chatting for now. How about we take a walk around Earth for a while. After all, you haven't seen this part of history."

"OK." Said Sendi.

"Sure." Agreed Matu.

"Wait a minute." Rexx interrupted. "Why were you stretching? We're not in the physical realm...right? So why stretch...do spirits get stiff?"

"Points to you, Rexx. Tell us why."

"Uh...I wasn't really ready for that question."

"Um, OK...body language?" Suggested Sendi.

"And...that's part of the 'what', now why?"

"OK, now I wasn't ready for that."

"Matu, do you want to give it a try?"

"Well, it says you're going to change from one attitude to another, abruptly dismissing, letting go, shrugging off what went before. Now, why, I don't know...all of what we were talking about seemed to me to be important, so that's not to be dismissed. But, you said 'taking a walk'...are we switching to being physical...and, hence, symbolic stretching of muscles before exercise...am I any where near getting close?"

"We would say that was very good observation on your part."

"So, why?"

"Well, it was to test your observation abilities. To remind you that soon they will be very valuable skills. And, yes, we are going into the physical realm, but not entirely so. We will be a faint suggestion of reality as Rexx and Sendi experienced on our brief visit to the time tour company. Only the most astute of humans might detect our existence in their surroundings. But, even then, we would only appear as a brief mention out of the corner of the eye. A second glance would confirm nothing."

"Can they hear us talking?"

"The buzz of an insect, the faint chirp of a distant bird, the whirr of a motor streets away...no more than this would we be in our most intense debate."

Sendi looked up and down the empty street. "So, where are we?"

"A small urban village, mostly residential with the few necessary business to service those needs. If we were to continue a lot further up this street, we would find ourselves in a larger industrial city, populated with factories and the bustle of humanity. All, somewhere in Europe...Germany, I believe...in the early Twenty First Century."

"Where is everybody?"

"It's early in the day. Most people are at their work. Householders are busy with meal preparations and other domestic work. A few streets over, shops are busy, but, we chose this quiet street so we could orient ourselves to our surroundings. When we are around people, including animals, or for that matter any living physical entity, we would caution you to avoid 'physically' touching them...we use that word loosely. Being somewhere between physical and spiritual existence, our vibration rate is different from theirs and that might make them uneasy and they may react adversely. It might make them feel a chill or somehow odd in another way. We don't want disturb these good people just by cohabiting with them."

As they started to wander down the street, Rexx paused at a shop's display window.

"What is it?" Sendi asked as she paused to look.

"It appears to be some sort of recording device"

"It's called a television." Matu supplied. "This appears to be a news broadcast."
They both stared at him.

"You mean, I know something you don't...wow. Anyhow, during my youth, televisions were rapidly becoming replaced by handheld computers that provided whatever information you wanted." He pointed to the TV set. "This is apparently back when a lot of people still found out what was going on in the world by watching live news broadcasts...people sitting at a desk and reading what the journalists handed them. It wasn't always very accurate. But then, the handhelds weren't always accurate either. They suffered from peoples opinions getting in the way of facts."

"Why are they wearing surgical masks?" Sendi asked. "I've seen medical recordings where masks are worn by doctors to keep the patient's wounds free from contamination. But, why here?"

"Maybe, the news is wounded?" Rexx joked.

"It probably was." Matu agreed laughingly. "But, no, this was during the scare of a massive disease outbreak. People wore masks because they thought it would keep them safe. Or so they were told. But, it was just another means of keeping people from questioning authority. At least, our mountain was spared, we were too remote to be noticed and so escaped being a part of it. We heard, but kept quiet. The miners left and the mine was closed for a few years, but it reopened later."

Sendi turned to the Time Police. "Was this part of the 'self-destruction' period that you spoke of?"

"Yes. A small group of people thought there were too many people in the world and they decided to find ways to de-populate the world. They used several illicit methods designed to convince the masses that their arguments were sound and they funded groups to back their ideas with massive campaigns and demonstrations. Detrimental drugs were distributed under the guise of health. Law enforcement was undermined by criminal activists. False scientific studies were promoted. Movement was restricted. All to convince people that they must believe their authorities and submit to the wishes of this group."

"But, why..that's horrible!"

"Yes, it was."

"But, didn't people notice that these actions were harmful?"

"After a while, yes. But, the arguments were packed with threats and emotional ploys and people were gullible, and so, it took years for the truth to finally be realized."

"Yes. We saw that." Matu added. "There was a lot going on. Propaganda was rampant and all sorts of rules were everywhere. The people in charge were very powerful. Vaccines were mandated. People who disobeyed were threatened with loss of work, they were shunned from markets, businesses were destroyed, and in some places people were even imprisoned in concentration camps."

"How did it end?" Rexx asked.

"People began to see what was happening. Here and there, they rebelled against those in power, but by then, many had already died and others were maimed for life. Gradually, people awakened to the other plans that had been put in motion by these tyrants...plans promising a better life, when in reality they were meant to reduce the quality of life to mere subsistence levels, hoping that more would die from starvation and cold."

"What happened to these tyrants? Were they ever punished?"

"Eventually, some were, some died before they could be, some simply vanished from sight."

Sendi turned and addressed the Time Police. "What does this look like on your end? Was it like the Alcaad war?"

"You mean all of the 'suddenly dead'?"

"Yes, I guess so, maybe also all of the pain and suffering caused by this."

"That may seem like a simple question, but the answer is very big and very complicated."

"How so?"

"Well, as each person is unique, so is each life, and also each death."

"But, many of these people were murdered. Doesn't it matter that their lives were ended prematurely?"

"Yes, it matters. But, these people acted on their faith. They didn't question. They believed the lies and did nothing to prevent the natural outcome. Yes, some awakened early to the truth, but few thought to seek reparative methods, or even to envision the existence of such."

"But, still...life...isn't that what's important?"

"Yes, it is important, every moment. But, what's important is how you live it. It's a precious experience and it is not to be squandered. Every thing you do in life has its consequences."

"But, what about these people who lied...aren't they responsible for all of these deaths?"

"Are they? They acted as catalysts, opportunities for others to question and make decisions. And, yes, they acted on their own behalf, and in their own interests, and you could say they were selfish. But, that's what we all do. In the grand scheme of things, each person is responsible first to themselves. They choose how to live their lives...what step to take, what corner to turn, do you open the door that contains the luxury vacation or the one that has the tiger? It's not pretty, but that's the way it is. None of us are victims, nor are we victimizers."

"That seems harsh. How would we know how to choose?"

"Largely, we don't. But, we hope to learn from mistakes and near mistakes, and we have ample opportunities to do so, both in our own actions and in the observation of others."

"I am suddenly very sad." Rexx said.

"Why?"

"Oh, I don't know. It all just suddenly feels so futile."

"Well, cheer up. We'll go for ice cream later."

"Huh?!"

"Got your attention, didn't it? And you lost your funk, didn't you?"

"Huh, you're right."

"Emotions are fleeting. We need to acknowledge them and let them go. It numbs the mind to dwell too long on them."

"How do we know when to let go?" Sendi asked.

"That question has a delicate answer."

"What do you mean by 'delicate'?"

"Maybe 'sensitive' would a more appropriate word. It's the ability to listen to the quiet voice within. Emotions have a tendency to shout and it takes a great effort to silence them enough to hear the voice which suggests reason."

"Huh, yeah." Rexx agreed. "You're right about that. So, how do we do that?"

"It's mostly a matter of practice, discipline, patience, and repetition. And, one of the most important...interruption."

"Interruption...how?"

"A surprise element disrupts the onslaught of an advancing army, no matter how big and powerful. If your tank falls into a sink hole, everything behind it grinds to a halt. So, if you interrupt the flow of your emotions, suddenly, they are without forward movement and reason has a chance to lend guidance. And that guidance is what is needed to learn from experience, to give us a chance to advance."

"Where are we advancing to?" Sendi asked.

"Whatever is next...the next realm, for example."

"What do you mean, the 'next realm'...what's that?"

"We are currently in what might be called the human associated realm. This is a place that exists both in the physical and non-physical, spiritual, if you wish to call it, where reside humans and those beings which humans are associated with."

"What do you mean by the 'associated' beings?"

"Those beings that humans have knowledge or, experience of, if that word implies more meaning. They would include animals, things, even concepts...any thing that humans are familiar with. The next realm, which we don't yet have a name for, would include things we don't yet have experience of. And, in that realm, we might be becoming, or by then have become, something beyond human."

"OK, you've lost me." Rexx said.

"And, me." Matu chimed in.

"I think you need to explain that." Sendi added.

"Consider this example...a year old baby, who is just starting to learn the small world of food and cushy toys that he is experiencing, accompanies his mother, who is a physics grad-student to a lecture. How does he interpret his experience? He has no knowledge of physics, professors, chalk boards, or even chalk. But, by experience he gains knowledge of these things and eventually, probably several years later, these things become part of his new realm. He is now no longer the inexperienced baby, he is now a college student. He has become more than what he was. So, it is the same with humans becoming more than humans. But, we will have to get there before we will know what we will be called."

"You mean you don't know?" Asked Rexx.

"No. As you are still in the human realm, so also, are we."

"Wow."

"So, you're not any more advanced than we are?" Matu asked.

"No. In some ways, we are more complete as we have remembered most of our multiple experiences. You will be there, more complete, as well, when you have refreshed your memories...but, don't dismay, that will come gradually and soon you will be as we are. And, then..."

"Then?" Prompted Sendi.

"Then, we will advance to the next level. Because, by then all of our stuff will be old news and we will be ready for lots of new adventures to add to our accomplishments."

"Huh, well, new adventures...that is what I asked for, isn't it?" Matu mused.

"So, let's walk around for a bit over to where there are more people. Down this way..." He indicated with a wave of his hand. "...should take us over onto another street."

"There's some people over there by that shop." Sendi pointed.

"So, what are they doing?" Asked Rexx.

"Looks like they're just walking around, looking at stuff in the windows, things like that."

"Well, what did you expect? What were you doing, when you were out shopping?" The Time Police asked.

"Well, I guess about the same. Was being alive, being human this boring?"

"You're still human, just not in the flesh walking around. It wasn't all that long ago. Have you forgotten so much so soon?"

"No, I guess not. It's just that we were doing stuff that was a lot more exciting with Matu's tribe and the Alcaad."

"But, you had mundane stuff in between the exciting stuff, didn't you? Don't forget things like eating, sleeping, bathing...brushing your teeth."

"Oh yeah, I guess all that stuff's there. It just gets overlooked and forgotten about."

"Hey, guys!" Matu interrupted. "That lady!" He pointed to where a woman was exiting a shop. "That bag she's carrying looks awfully heavy. I don't think she can manage those steps carrying it." He started to move towards her.

"Stop!" Commanded the Time Police.

Matu froze. "Oh, yeah. Don't touch anyone." He remembered. "I can't talk either, because she can't hear me, right?"

At that moment, the woman collapsed on the sidewalk. The three started to move and then stopped.

"Can't we do something?" Sendi wailed. "What's happening?"

"You three are about to have a lesson. It's sometimes called 'retrieval'. This woman, we're afraid, is about to die, and you are going to help her adjust to this experience."

"But, what happened to her? It looked like all she did was fall. That shouldn't have killed her, should it?"

"The vaccines." Matu said softly. "They were meant to kill."

"Oh."

They watched quietly as a ghost of the woman began to stir above her crumpled form.

"Now, it's time for your lesson. You three go over to her. She is in our locale now and she can see and hear you. Talk softly to her. Ask her how she is. You can touch her now. Help her stand if she wishes. Comfort her. But, do not explain anything or try to advise. Only be helpful. She will be in shock. If she asks what happened. Say only what you saw...that she fell. She will have to work out the experience for herself. If she has realized that she has died, try to calm her. Helpers will arrive soon. You may help guide her toward them. They may appear dressed as medics. They may arrive in an ambulance. They will appear in whatever form that she would have expected if she were involved in an accident. And the realization of that expectation will help to comfort her. The helpers will take her to a place where she can rest and recuperate. Once she has healed from her ordeal, she will be ready to move on."

"Where will she move on to?" Sendi asked.

"That's her decision...the Universe is immense. Now, go, get to work! She's already becoming distressed...go help her."

They waved goodbye to the woman as the helpers settled her on the gurney. And she returned the wave as she disappeared into the ambulance.

Sendi sighed deeply. "That was both difficult and, I think, nice. But, I felt like I was lying."

The Time Police nodded. "We understand. But, the deceit you felt was in withholding knowledge. She was in emotional shock and that knowledge would have done more harm than good."

"Will she be OK?"

"Yes. The helpers are very good at relieving pain."

"Is there always pain?"

"In rare cases, some individuals have relatively none. But, for the rest, the level varies."

"What causes the pain?"

"The emotional harshness of life. The realization of how past decisions resulted in their consequences, the sorrow of unrealized ambitions, the loss of happiness that could have been achieved, separation from a loved one, all of these and more contribute to the pain of the ending of a life."

"What about heaven and hell and rest in peace and all of that?" Rexx asked.

"Well, in a sense, once your particular personality, physical body, with all of its memories has died, it can rest in peace, or depending on its mental emotional state, enjoy heaven, or suffer hell. This period of resting in peace is a time to repair, to heal, to rebuild in preparation for your next experience, your next lifetime, where you will take this previous life experience along as a hidden memory, a guide, a warning during your journey. Between the period of rest and the beginning of your next journey, you relax into a state where your focus is no longer fixed on a given facet, but you see, you experience, relive all of your myriad facets with equal attention. It is a place where balance provides insight, pros and cons become knowledge." He paused. "This is also a place where you can look back upon what you just left. Once you have come to the acceptance of what has transpired and can look at it without the clouds of emotion, you can revisit, so to speak, that which you left behind. You can see how your existence, and now, your absence has affected those you shared life with. This is an important facet of reflection. It also provides a closure...a way of saying goodbye, of separating, from that life and those you loved and who loved you. You see, when one has died, the main part goes on to another experience, but the previous personality lingers. It is held within loved one's memories, but it is also deeply integrated with all of the possessions of that life and they are all there to assist and guide as needed. And, they may be needed for a very long time, indeed as long as memory is there to support them."

"Are we still connected?"

"Oh, yes, of course! You have not died...have not separated from your earthly lives. You just, shall we say, 'left town' for a while. The lady who recently died has not yet separated her complete self from her recent incarnation, but is in the process of doing so. You are currently completely connected, so it is hard for you to see your total self as your focus is directed at your current 'self'."

Sendi glanced at Rexx and Matu and then looked down at herself. "I just realized that Rexx and I are no longer wearing our Envirosuits."

Matu looked at his clothing and commented. "And I'm not dressed the way I was when I left the mountain."

"Yes. We adjusted your appearance to complement the situation."

"T-shirt and jeans?" Sendi queried.

"It's how most young adults would have dressed during the time of this woman's demise. Had you appeared in 'spacesuits', it would have added to her distress."

"Yes, I see your point. How do you know all of this?"

"We, the non-physical aspect of each being are capable of being in contact, communicating, with others, as we have the need. At the point of death, the non-physical aspect often reaches out to those nearest for assistance in easing the crossing."

"Oh...I guess that makes sense." Sendi mumbled as she wandered over to where the faint outline of the woman's body lay on the ground.

"I think..." Rexx began. "I'm kind of in shock after all of what just happened."

"We understand. Your first job was abruptly thrust upon you, after all. We will take some time to decompress."

Sendi stood there for some time staring at it.

"What is troubling you?" The Time Police asked.

"There's nothing around her." She looked at him. "What happened to the street? Where are the shops? The people in the street...the sky...everything?"

"Oh." He snapped his fingers. Suddenly, everything was back. The shoppers were gathered around the woman's body which lay at the bottom of the shop's steps. One man was talking to the shop keeper, who was standing on the top of the steps. The siren of an emergency vehicle was heard approaching from the end of the street.

"What...what did you do?"

"We returned things to the physical order. While you were tending to the woman's needs, we reduced perception to her point of view. As she was concentrating on her transition, the physical world was of less importance, and so, it faded from view."

"Oh, I think I understand." She paused. "Something else..."

"What?"

"You said we were in a village in Germany?"

"Yes."

"I don't speak German, and certainly not the German of three thousand years ago. Do you, Rexx?"

"No." He replied.

"Matu?"

"Uh uh." He shook his head.

"Then how were we able to talk with her?"

"Ah, yes. You weren't actually speaking. Neither was she. You were communicating by concepts...thought images."

"Elaborate, please."

"Language, the physical art of tongue wagging, is only a sequence of predetermined squelches representing concepts. As we are in the non-physical, we can bypass the sounds and concentrate on the concepts. If you look closely, you will notice that the sounds only represent images in your mind. If we say the word 'elephant', you don't think of the sound of the word, nor of the printed text. You picture an elephant."

"But, what about less tangible thoughts?"

"For example?"

"Oh, say 'comfort'?"

"Well, if we say 'are you comfortable?', what do you image? Think about it. What do you see?"

"Oh. Yes. I get the point. I see myself in a surrounding that shows me being comfortable. I'm sitting in a soft chair by a warm fire. I'm feeling cool breezes while sitting under a palm tree on a sunny beach. That kind of thing."

"That is correct. That is how we learn these elusive concepts, by relating them to hard physical experiences.

"Matu?" Rexx ventured softly. "You're looking awfully serious. Why so quiet?"

He looked up, then shrugged his shoulders. "Donno, really. I guess I'm just trying to make sense out of a bunch of stuff that I'm not all that familiar with."

"What do you mean?" Sendi added.

"Well, I sort of know about what's been going on in this era since it's close to my own time. But, being isolated, and I guess insulated, by the mountain, it wasn't really relevant to every day life...at least, for us anyway. But, seeing it now, up close...well, it

makes me realize how little I understand it." He paused. "You see, war, and this select few deciding how the rest should live...and die...well, that's just another type of war. But, it's just not how I'm used to seeing the world. It's not the world I grew up in...nor lived in. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I think so. Your isolation protected you."

"Yeah. But, it's more than that. Sure, in any group, there's going to be differences of opinion, and sometimes, they can be pretty heated. But, not to such an extreme. I mean, I'm used to arguments being resolved in a short amount of time...a few days of disgruntled feelings at the most. But, never has anyone claimed so much authority over someone else...much less would anyone else allow them to do something like that. Why? That's what I don't get. Why would any person allow someone to dictate to them like that?"

Sendi shook her head. "I don't know. It does seem pretty severe."

"Maybe, we just lived in a more gentle world." Rexx said.

"More civilized? You mean?" She asked.

"May we intervene?" The Time Police pleaded.

"Of course! I'm sure you have a lot more experience with this than we do."

"Yes. Unfortunately, this is true. You see, none of this happens overnight. It takes a very long time of careful planning to orchestrate these kinds of activities. Now, this is not to say that the end result was in the original plan. That probably came after a lot of learning that controlling others resulted in personal gain. The particulars of the gain grew as the skills to profit improved. Do you see?"

"I think so. Can you describe?"

"Take a young child. He wants something and his parents refuse. He gets angry and starts crying. The parents give in, and he gets what he wanted. He remember this and his behavior is reinforced. Later, he's old enough to be out with other children, and some child has something that he wants, so he takes it. The other child begins to cry. He remembers his behavior, and thinks, 'Well, I just used crying to get my way...his crying won't work on me. I'm keeping the toy.'...more reinforcement, and so, on and on, as he grows older. Meanwhile, the toyless crying child has learned to do what the bully wanted out of fear of something worse happening, usually the threat of being beaten. As the children mature into adulthood, generally, their behavior patterns continue to be reinforced. The strong get stronger, and the meek get meeker. Only occasionally does the rebel arise."

"What happens to him?"

"Usually, society pushes him back into the throng, because they have been conditioned to accept the restrictions, and the rebel will just cause more problems. A new law will be enacted to apply greater punishment to those who speak against the norm.

"But, he's speaking out against the oppressors."

"Right, and the oppressors can't allow that."

"But, why not?"

"Because, the oppressors will lose the control they hold over the masses. You see, going back to our example, the child who has become an adult has found that the easiest way to get what he wants is through intimidating others to the point that he can just take things, and now he has time left on his hands. If he had to expend energy, say by working at a job to earn enough money to get the things he wanted, he would not have this extra time to become bored with his acquisitions. But, now he has time...as the saying goes, 'idle hands are the Devil's workshop; idle lips are his mouthpiece'. So, he has this extra time and his toys are no longer fun. He wants, though at this point his desire is becoming an addiction, he needs bigger and better toys."

"Sex and drugs and rock and roll..." Matu muttered.

"Huh?" Rexx asked. "What was that about?"

"Oh, it's from some popular music from the outside world. I think it was about things people wanted or needed."

"Exactly!" Said the Time Police. "Needs become more and more extreme, and oppressors become more and more needy. The higher up your influence becomes, the lessor of importance are those you influence. So, after a while, those people are in your way and you have time to think about how to get rid of them."

"They even made people pay for the vaccines they made to kill them." Matu added.

"They did even more terrible things than that...but, for now, we won't enumerate such things, save to say that their desires were deeply immersed in physical pleasures and were extremely self-centered."

"But, is there no end to this...disease...I don't know what else to call it when something builds continuously on itself obviously destroying its host...the individual. Is there no ability to see outside of oneself...to seek a cure?"

"Oh, there is an end. Well, if the person doesn't destroy himself first. It's in the cycles." He pointed skyward.

Sendi looked up. "You mean the sun? The sun has cycles?"

"Yes. We know of them. We have experience of them and their effects upon the other bodies within this system and also beyond. And it does seem that humans are susceptible to its changes, both blatant and subtle."

"What does it do? I mean, that we react to?"

"At certain points in its cycles the sun's energies alter the stability of its satellites. Humans, being dependent on Earth's stability for their own cycles, feel these disturbances as a sense of disassociation, uneasiness, or as you called it, disease. It may actually be what causes humans to be more self-concerned and less aware of other beings. A need for preservation of self may overtake the need for coming together as family and community. We see these effects, but do not completely understand the affect...the Sun's conscious actions."

"You make it sound like the sun is alive."

"Of course he is. But, he, we use the pronoun loosely, exists in a different realm. The human realm only knows the smallest part of his being...that which has penetrated our experience. But, we co-exist with him. Hopefully, we will learn more of his realm as we advance together. And, through that knowledge, we will aspire to become more in harmony."

"So, are we now, here, in a disharmonious stage of his cycles?"

"Oh, most definitely. And the Earth is resonating to the Sun, which apparently is part of what is causing so much discontent among her inhabitants. They are misaligned with the particular harmonic in their locality."

"Huh?" Rexx blinked. "Run that by me again."

"If it's too hot, move into the shade." Matu offered.

"You got that!?" Rexx exclaimed.

"Yeah...it's kind of seer meditation stuff we learned as kids. If the spiritual energies in a given place are too strong and feel contrary to your meditation, then it's better to relocate to another more sympathetic place where you feel more comfortable. If you try to fight the energies, you'll just wear yourself out."

Sendi addressed the Time Police. "Does this have anything to do with what they call Ley Lines, spiritual energy lines that lie along the surface of the planet?"

"In part, you could say it does. There are energy veins that conduct forces through the Earth's physical body, but what has been studied and mapped by humans has also

been influenced by their way of thinking. What's in process here is part of an ongoing communication among the celestial bodies. And as with all communications, some are more energetic than others. The association with heightened energies can cause both euphoria and distress...too many sweets can make you happy until the excess sugar enters your bloodstream."

"Ouch!" Remarkd REXX. "I think we all remember times like that when we were kids."

"Yes, but what is important as humans in the presence of these energies is to recognize them for what they are and to release the emotional overreaction that seems to come all too easily."

"Isn't that one of those things that's easier said than done?"

"We're afraid that's very true as well. But, awareness, patience, and trying to adopt a calm, rational frame of mind helps to allow logic to sort out many issues."

"So..." Sendi continued. "Is this discontent in any way connected with this...for want of a better word...abuse of humanity being committed by these few...um, tyrants?"

"Yes, definitely. Heightened emotions make people easy to control."

"But, from what I see, all of these people are just so many unemotional sheep being led to slaughter, shouldn't they be reacting...rebellng?"

"Well, first of all they aren't unemotional...they are scared to death. That's why they are submitting to whatever promise of salvation that the tyrants are holding over their heads."

"Wait a minute...scared to death? How did that happen?"

"Remember, there was a disease, and people were told that it had spread from one place to another and within a few weeks, the media called it a pandemic. People everywhere were sick and dying, they said. Of course, people began to be afraid. The media started presenting the politicians who quoted the scientists, and they told the people what to do, and that no one should question them, because, well, they are 'scientists' and you're not. Then they said everyone should stay home and wear masks. All of this made people even more afraid...afraid that everyone and everything would make them sick. Then came the vaccines, and people were told that anyone not vaccinated would spread the disease and kill everyone else. Yes, they were 'scared to death'. All rationale had left the populace, and reduced them to sheep...mind-numbed sheep. So, they believed the authorities and did whatever they were told to do. It took a lot of time and effort to break out of that mindset. You see the process is a matter of the gradual increase of fear inducing information until people are willing to accept the dictate. Once the dictate has become accepted as normal behavior, then it's raised a little more by adding slightly different information until the next tolerance level is achieved, and so on, and so on, until you have achieved complete control."

"So, it's that easy?" Asked REXX.

"Yes...yes it is." Sighed Sendi. "I'm remembering my training. It is easy, but, it does take time and persistence. And, most authorities are very skilled in maintaining an attitude of persistence. That's how they get into power and how they maintain it."

"But, why?" Matu asked, shaking his head. "What's it all for? I mean, why control...why cause pain and torture people? Where does it go? Where does it end? You don't see animals doing this kind of behavior."

"I have." REXX said quietly.

"Huh? What...where?"

"Cats...domesticated cats will sometimes play with a caught mouse or bird...extending the injury until it dies. Then they lose interest."

"I stand corrected. But, 'domesticated'...do they learn this from humans...again, why?"

"I don't know." Commented Sendi. "Maybe it's because they are domesticated...they are well fed, but, because they are naturally hunters, they have to follow their instinct. Maybe...I don't know."

"OK." Matu continued. "But, why? Why are people...well, OK...'some' people so destructive? Because, there are obviously plenty of people that aren't...the ones who are getting hurt by all of this."

"That's a very good question." Sighed the Time Police. "Unfortunately, we don't know the answer."

"You don't!?" Rexx commented, then shook his head. "Right...I keep forgetting...you don't know all the answers."

"No, we don't. And, perhaps, we never will. So much of it comes down to choices...choices made on prior experiences, and or, on the lack thereof. Take your cat and mouse...the cat is a natural hunter...an innate experience handed down from his ancestors. Maybe, there's some aspect where the prey must be assured to be dead...play with it to make sure it doesn't escape and you go hungry. The domesticated cat doesn't need to eat the mouse, but the urge is there. Maybe the same could be said for humans. A modern man who isn't required to take up a spear to hunt his dinner from the market feels the lack of the hunting activity his hunter ancestor engaged in. Maybe he feels this urge to track or hunt his fellow man...perhaps a man that he feels is inferior to him because of some social status. He has the spare time that the lack of needing to hunt has provided him plus the emotional drive to satisfy the boredom caused by the excess time available. We're not saying this is the answer, but in some case, it might be."

"Wow." Exclaimed Rexx. "You may have just given me the answer to why young people seem to be obsessed with game playing...assertion of strength, superiority over competitors...the ancient drive of hunter over hunted."

"I doubt it's as simple as that." Sendi commented.

"No. But, it's a possibility. And, I'm sure in some few cases, it probably is the answer."

"I think I might agree with that." Matu added. "I've witnessed kids getting out of control in the heat of passion while playing games. They can get pretty brutal."

"I'll agree." Said Sendi. "Children can act like animals...huh? I said 'animals' didn't I? Oh well, I guess that's how we think, isn't it? I guess children are...OK, not like animals, but...well, primitive until they grow up and learn to be civilized. Hmm, 'primitive', self-centered versus 'civilized', including others."

"And, not all succeed in becoming civilized." Rexx remarked.

"True. But, again, I don't think the answer is all that simple."

"No, Sendi, it isn't." The Time Police shook his head. "Because there isn't one answer. There are too many questions, too many circumstances, too much unbridled emotion, and too many choices for any one answer. Each case is unique."

"So, what can we do? How do we prevent this abuse?"

"Well...we can't."

"But, why not?" She complained.

"It's not our place. We don't have that right. We are not allowed to judge their choices."

"Oh."

"You see, the only thing we can do is to offer an alternative. It's each individual's decision to accept it, reject it in favor of some other possibility, or completely ignore its existence."

"You know..." Rexx began. "This reliving old instinctual drives...is this just memory being revived, or is it something deeper?"

"What do you mean?" Asked Sendi.

"Is it something incomplete...like opening an old wound because it's irritated and not healing properly."

"...and?"

"You know...you've got an old scar, and it's itching, and you keep scratching it without even thinking about it, and sooner or later you notice it starts bleeding...only it's a memory...and it bleeds emotional pain."

"Wow...dramatic. That's usually my kind of response." Matu snickered. "But, seriously, do you have more to add to that?"

"Well, at what point are you able to stop covering it up and dig down to start finding out what's causing the pain?"

"That can only happen..." Said the Time Police. "...when you are able to confront the trauma. When some experience in your past is so severe that you have to keep putting it aside, covering the wound with a bandage and hoping it will heal by itself, it won't. It will just keep nagging at you until you actually face the problem. Often the real issue is not as bad as we think it is. We remember the pain that the original experienced caused and that becomes the obstacle to addressing the experience. Once we can look past that memory of pain, which involves letting go of the fear of the pain, then we can start to reopen the experience and acknowledge the responsibility...'how am I a part of the experience?' In every experience, 'I' is as much a part as is the 'action'. Addressing what really happened is the point where healing can begin."

"Sounds hard."

"It is. It is very hard to tear away all those walls of defense that have been built up...often for years, if not lifetimes. But, it can be done. Then we can start to advance. One other thing...every time we encounter an unresolved experience, it gets harder to resolve."

"Why?"

"What doesn't kill it, makes it stronger...does that work for you?"