

"Yes, what is it all about?" Rexx interjected. "You talk about points of view, but all we're seeing is opposites, good and evil, truth and lies, real and fake. How can it just come down to a point of view when someone is so destructive of others?"

"Yeah..." Matu agreed. "It seems that good is being replaced by evil, and once it's accepted by everybody, it's now the new 'good'."

"Everybody?" Questioned Sendi.

"Well, the 'everybody' that counts...the ones in charge that tell the rest what they should and shouldn't be doing. They spread the lies and tell everyone it's the truth."

"But, when one point of view that promotes the views of many can be so easily adulterated by another influence to change it to a different extreme...well, why?" She asked. "Are people so simple in their beliefs and convictions that they can be so easily persuaded?"

"Maybe the persuasion is not as easy as it is assumed to be." The Time Police suggested.

"What do you mean?"

"Consider the pandemic that we discussed...emotion is a very powerful persuader. If your life is in danger, your loved one's well being, even the threat of losing your material possessions...any of these can drive people to drastic decisions that would be contradictory to what would be assumed logical under normal conditions. Constant reinforcement can convince even the most devout belief to be in error. A truth that is understood in context can often not be recognized outside of that context."

"Good or evil, points of view, truth or lies, real vs. a facade...how much is real and how much is just cinema?" Matu asked.

The Time Police sighed deeply. "Does it matter? It's all about your interpretation, understanding, and reaction to what is being presented."

"So, what is the difference here?" Rexx asked. "If what we understand as good is characterized by order, tranquility, peace, lack of conflict and evil is characterized by violence, hate, disorder, and division, and if you are doing the things that produce the latter, what you're really advocating for is evil. How can this be reduced to just a point of view?"

Yeah, and why is evil so strong and good so weak?" Added Matu.

"So many questions...we'll begin with strength...what you are calling evil gains its strength by drawing everything in."

"And good?"

"That one diminishes itself...we should say it thins itself, through sharing with others."

"I don't understand...how is that a good thing? I mean good should be benefiting others, it should be doing good." She shook her head. "OK, how do I say 'good' without saying 'good'?"

"We guess you don't." He smiled. "But, good is doing 'good'. And its 'strength' is in sharing itself with others."

"OK, I guess that makes sense. But, it doesn't seem strong. It should be defeating evil...shouldn't it?"

"Gathering and letting go are parts of natural order, and both must occur to balance reality. They may not happen at the same time, and most often do not...but sooner or later...eventually, balance must, and will be achieved."

"Isn't that kind of contradictory? I mean, if you're building something up and then tearing it down, isn't that sort of against what you've been talking about with advancement?"

"Not necessarily. You can be creating something to build on your reality or intent and you can be creating something that will remove things from your reality, such as beginning a new routine or course of study that would release old habits or correct mistakes. In either of these cases, the opportunity for advancement exists."

"OK, I agree with that." She said.

"From knowledge of a single sight we were cast out of the garden of simplicity to learn to grow the sight of many eyes...the fruit, as they say, of the tree of knowledge. At the origin, humans accepted what was as all...no differentiation. With discernment came the concepts of good and evil, and not just the extremes, but all the fine distinctions in between. From this tiny seed a tall tree has grown.

"Humph, and I bet it had to climb its way out of the dirt." Remarked Matu. "So, what has this knowledge brought humanity?"

"What is the value of any knowledge?" Added REXX. "It seems to bring a lot of trouble with it."

"It opens the possibility for understanding and questioning."

"What do you mean 'questioning'? Doesn't understanding fulfill the purpose of knowledge?" Sendi asked.

"Do you stop there? When you wondered what the Time Barricade was made of and you decided it was some kind of fog, wasn't your next thought 'how is it made'?"

"I see." She admitted.

"So, how was it made?" Quipped REXX. "And, how did it appear to change from fog to solid as you approached it?"

"Ah, you seek knowledge! Do you want free knowledge, the 'scientific' explanation, or do you want the little cold box and the tools to take it apart and see what really makes it tick?"

"Uh...what's the difference?"

"One will give you one answer, and the other might provide something entirely different. The 'free' knowledge, the knowledge that someone else worked out for themselves is only useful if you know how to use it. And it is often disdained as too easily obtained to be of any real value. But, when you pry open the nut you find all of the tiny intricacies, the shapes, the color, the aroma, the taste...everything to tempt your senses and encourage your mind to explore. That knowledge is many times more complex than some words in a book."

"Wow, I hadn't considered that there could be that much difference. But, I can see how a subjective exploration can be so much more informative than just accepting some facts."

"Yeah..." Added Matu. "Especially if you consider that those facts may not be totally accurate and include a lot of hear-say." He paused. "And, what little cold box?"

"Oh, the Time Barricade fog seemed to have been generated by a small shiny metal box...it was really cold to the touch...you remember seeing a similar barricade near our TimePod in the cave."

"Yeah, but I didn't see a box."

REXX looked blank for a moment. "You know, come to think of it, I don't remember seeing one either. Did you, Sendi?"

She thought a moment. "No, I don't think I saw anything either." She turned to the Time Police. "Why's that? How was there a barricade without its generator?"

He smiled. "Remember what the tour guide said...'trade secrets'?"

"Aw, come on...what's so secret that we can't know?"

"Nothing, really."

"And...?"

"Come on, yourself. Use your mind...we're on the other side of the veil. What do you think?"

"Smoke and mirrors?" Rexx ventured.

"Huh?"

"Well, he did say the time tour was all mostly a hoax, a lot of smoke and mirrors."

"So, was it, is it?" She looked at the Time Police. "Is it all just a hoax...imagination? Is there no such thing as science?"

"There is science, but it exists in the context of 'science'."

"What do you mean?"

"Everything...science, mathematics, art, 'b' follows after 'a'...all exist within their own context. A cook doesn't care about atoms and certainly doesn't need to have any knowledge of how they form molecules to transform a chunk of raw meat into a perfectly seasoned and succulent roast."

"But, here...?" She paused. "Doesn't all that matter here as well? I mean, are we in a void separate from all of that?"

"Here, is a state of reflection and preparation. There, is a state of action and reaction."

"I'm not sure I completely understand...what's real, here or there?"

"Both...everything's real. Why wouldn't it be?"

"But, as a 'walking around human'...I don't know how else to describe it...things are solid. And, here...well, it's all mist with fade ins and outs. It doesn't seem very tangible, you know?"

"Ah, we understand your dilemma. We made the separation so as to avoid distraction...a quiet place for contemplation and discussion. The everyday world has so much going on in it...well, there would be continuous elements of distraction...babbling brooks, rustling leaves, birds chirping, traffic noise, children playing, that sort of thing. It was just for convenience."

"Oh."

"Well, I agree." Matu said. "It does feel kind of unreal here. When the Time Police asked me if I'd like to take a long walk outside of time, I didn't expect it to be quite like this."

"Do you regret your decision? We could make provision for your return if you wish."

"Oh, no, no...I wouldn't want to have missed this for the world."

"You know..." Said Sendi. "I'm amazed by your courage...to go beyond the physical of now time into the void would be extremely disconcerting...OK, it would totally freak me out. I mean before our experience with the TimePod. But, even that was more like an amusement ride."

"Well, Sendi, you and Rexx seem to have gotten used to being out of space-time."

"Well, yeah, but that was because of the time tour. We expected what was going to happen, sort of...that is...up until it didn't."

"But, Matu..." Interjected the Time Police. "In our opinion, you are a man of amazing self awareness and abilities to have so easily walked into the void. Could it have been because of your journeying skills?"

"Do you think so? I'm not so sure. I mean, Sendi is the best of all of us when it comes to journeying. I think, maybe, it's because it seemed so easy when they did it...left in the TimePod, I mean, and I was just really lonely and missed them. I mean...how hard could it be?"

They all laughed.

"Yes, still the comedian!" Remarked Sendi.