

## RANDOM THOUGHTS – PART 2

**2011**

Today, I saw the elderly man with the suspenders again. He was wearing the same clothes as the day before. I'm surprised since it's summertime here in Florida when the thermometer reaches in the high nineties during the day and humidity is very high. But I guess at his age - 100 years old, I found out later - people don't sweat as much and can wear clothes two days in a row. Anyhow, he was cleaning a bird bath on his property with a broom and bleach; my educated guess since a gallon of what looked like it was lying on the ground beside him. This ordinary chore proved to me one thing: he still cares. Even in old age, the desire to take care of someone or something is still much alive in most of us. The other day he cared for his lawn, and today he was making sure the birds had clean water to drink and bathe in.

A dog in a fenced-in yard barked at me as I walked by it. It was a cute little black dog with shaggy hair but with an annoying high pitch bark that wouldn't stop as he ran back and forth along the fence. Why in the world do the smallest dogs always bark so loud? Is it because they want to prove to themselves that even if they're small they're still in charge of their territory and can chew you up if you trespass? I notice that some people I met in life acted the same way. The smaller they were, the louder they spoke and the more annoying they were.

An incident comes to mind when in sixth grade I was being harassed by a *midget* with his love notes. I know it's kind of nice to see that someone loves you that much but when you can't reciprocate, the situation could get really hard to handle. So, more than once I told him in a nice way to stop, but he wouldn't. He was persistent, I must give him that! But my patience reached its limit one day during recess and I totally lost it. "*Leave me alone! Go get lost!*" I shouted. Oh, I knew I shouldn't have said that. He walked away angry and ready for battle. I had a hunch he would retaliate sooner or later but I didn't expect it would be so soon after the incident.

Back in class, I saw him walk to the pencil sharpener in the back of the classroom. On his way back, he purposely passed by my seat and hit me forcefully in the arm with his pencil. His action was swift and premeditated and it hurt like crazy, so I started screaming and disrupted the entire class in the process. The teacher rushed to my desk and after a brief evaluation of the situation, she pulled out a piece of lead. My attacker was punished and I was sent home. Later on, we both apologized for our bad behavior, and he finally backed off. The lead left a permanent imprint, so I am reminded every time I look at it that I was once admired! How lovely... I didn't keep in touch with this guy for obvious reasons, but I would not be surprised if I hear one day that he's the owner of a tattoo parlor!..

As I moved along, a vehicle parked on a curbside attracted my attention. Well, it wasn't the vehicle as such, but the license plate in the rear that sparkled under the sun. As I got closer, I could see diamond-like stones glued all around its frame. The interior was as glamorous, with pompoms and other small objects strategically displayed along its dashboard. *WOW! That's what I call an all equipped vehicle that doesn't go unnoticed!* I thought. It certainly reflected its owner's personality; probably one with a flair for flamboyance. I, myself, has always been one to fly under the radar, so being at the wheel of such a car would be inconceivable. Different people, different personalities. That's what makes the world such an interesting place after all!..

As I kept walking, my thoughts lingered a little bit longer on how our different personalities can influence our way of life. As far as I'm concerned, I've always felt more comfortable 'playing the

second fiddle' and my life in general reflects that trait to a certain degree. I don't think it's a bad thing in itself. As the saying goes, and I kind of agree with it... *'There are too many chiefs and not enough Indians in the world'*. Well, I'm making up for the lack of Indians!...I have to admit also that deep down I am a timid and introvert person who tries to avoid confrontations as much as possible. I may not appear this way at first glance, but I truly am. I must say though that with years, I've succeeded more or less to overcome these traits.

Growing up, I remember looking up to the leaders in my class and later on at work, feeling terribly inadequate as I compared myself to them. However, I finally realized that both leaders and supporters - or helpers - were needed in this world, and that the first group doesn't necessarily overtake the other. Their role may be different but they are as important. They both need to work in collaboration in order for any venture to succeed. So, keeping this in mind, my purpose in life is to find ways to use the talents God gave me to the best of my abilities, and in doing so glorify him, and hopefully make a difference in the lives of people I come in contact with. After all, isn't this the reason I've been created for?...

On the way back home, the same sprinkler that was watering the bushes the other day was on again this morning. And as I promised myself, I walked right through it. "Yeah! I did it!" I felt like shouting.

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