

# PEACE

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*For my anger. Long may it vex me.*

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The cold winter air was bothering him a lot. His pace of walking was quite quick, and therefore he was breathing pretty hard. His nose felt simultaneously runny, as well as stuffed. His mucous membrane swollen, not allowing much air to pass through, and the glasses he wore would fog up with every exhale. He thought of how completely inadequate the human body was. Failing eyes, inadequate respiratory system.

Thinking about all this led him to think about inadequacies in general, how often he encountered them, how he would find fault in so many things: systems not working, software buggy, promises made but never kept. And all of this eating away at his tranquility, his equilibrium, as this was supposed to be a nice walk out to de-stress, recharge and in general promote his well-being.

Instead the thoughts, you could call them intrusive, would circle and swirl around his brain and the rage in him built and built until it was this white hot hate-filled Sun, the star of enmity shining bright, blasting everything out of its path.

He thought of how much he despised being a conscious being, having to deal with reflection and thought and judgment. How everything, except all that came before man, reflects this fundamental flaw, this failed broken artifice that is human achievement, human existence, human result, human product.

Out of thin air beside him on the path, as if just materialized out of his sheer desire for ending this experience, an axe lay. It was a hand axe, not much larger than 30 centimeters in length, with a blade of 10 to 15 centimeters wide. Heavy, sharp steel forged in other stars long ago, fashioned into a sharp instrument of destruction. Not even surprised but slightly grateful perhaps, he picked up the hand axe and contemplated it for a second as he held it in his hand.

Still the rage did not pass, only grew in intensity, and as he finally, ultimately, made his most important decision, he sank to his knees and started ramming the axe into his head. All white, all scream. He managed a second blow. He saw red mixing with the white. His eyesight failed, the rage still hammering in his being, but with a third blow

penetrating deep into his brain mass, suddenly, as if in slow motion, peace descended upon him.

When police finally showed up after another walker had phoned in the incident, they found him there, a victim of a massacre. His head completely smashed in with the axe. His brain matter splattered all over the ground, over the grass, the mud. They couldn't understand how this had happened. There was no forensic evidence of another person being there. No indication in his private life, in his communications, of foul play.

They came to the conclusion, the inevitable, logical conclusion, that this man had smashed his own head in, which was, if not unpalatable, then at least unimaginable to the police force. Speculation about his motives, the determination and intent to accomplish such a feat, was discussed among the public at large as well as in academic circles.

If anything was clear, it was that this had been self-hatred, because there were no drugs found in his system to explain any of this, no evidence of foul play, only a speculation, a motive alluded to by friends and acquaintances, that he must have been

tired of consciousness to such a degree that he decided that this was the only way to cease consciousness, cease existing.

After it was determined that this was self-inflicted, the hand axe was stored away. It was eventually sold five years later at an auction, having been cleaned up and polished, it ended up in the hands of a family man who had a carpentry business. He only once hurt himself, cut himself while using the axe, sharpening it. Otherwise, the axe never hurt or caused peace again.