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The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster
than society gathers wisdom.

Isaac Asimov, scientist and writer (1920-1992)

White Room

The man with the shaved head stood upright, arms by his side. He looked around the room. “White” he whispered, tilting his head to one side. The curtains, the bedding, the floor. His clothes. All white.

Lit by the afternoon sun coming through the window, a sandy white cyclone of dust spun and danced before him. Towering above the whirlwind of dust, he watched and smiled. The particles swirled in harmony, celebrating their existence, yet at battle with each other, *making futile attempts to affect their fate*. He thought of the dust as solar systems borne and dying before him - *I am the historian of the universe*.

The man’s vantage point did not include time, and so he only understood that life was happening all at once and forever. As when one stands in front of a mirror with another mirror behind. The reflections go on forever ... *And they have to*, he thought.

All at once and forever.

He watched as the dust bumped and danced, solar systems amongst never-ending solar systems. Through prism-like eyes he calculated ... he was sure he could determine when our universe was created. And when it would end. His was the complacency of understanding all fate.

Noticing one particle ... *Earth*, he whispered. *You’re a special one*. He reached towards it. He floated from the bed, heading towards the window, swimming through the stars. His motions were smooth, but to the untrained eye, it seemed he was not moving at all. *There is so much* he thought, *between here and the window. A million galaxies, a billion skies*. By the time he made his way to the window, days or years had passed. He watched as

dust particle *Earth* spun into another orbit.

And so it seemed more than a thousand years since he'd made real contact with another human being. He understood that he may never be able to communicate with them again, not that it mattered, in the big picture.

He waved his arms, pushing the dust, the stars, the universe, affecting the tempest. He took on his favorite role as *Director of The Universe*, whispering, *May I have this dance?*

And he danced, smiling as he calculated complex algorithms, closing his eyes, determining the location of every particle at each given moment, its acceleration, thrust, its movement

He bowed, *Will you be my partner?*

He could clearly see every particle, taking its place in the universe. *I'm not in control of it, I am it*, he thought. Particles enveloped his body, swirling about, across his chest, down his arms, churning around him ... he threw his head back and laughed ... a laugh of completeness. To dance with the universe and to know no other being was able to.

Except ... God.

And *by God* he felt lucky and alive to experience God's experience. He didn't think *he* was God. *Only God gets to be God*, he thought letting out a muted laugh.

So why am I allowed to understand HIS experience?

And then ... he stopped the laughing and dancing. He paused, and started to cry.

His head fell to his hands with the weight of the universe as tears ran through his fingers, dropping down onto the white floor, crashing like meteors.

His sobbing increased with his realization. *Why do I understand God? I'm human. What will God do with me? Where will I go?* He felt a million years of sadness all at once.

For all that he understood, this was something he did not. He knew what it was like to be God and therefore he *knew* unequivocally that God existed. He didn't *believe* in *God*, at least not the way others do. No. It wasn't faith; it was an understanding. He simply *knew*. He knew God was there and he knew God danced with the universe. He imagined God was looking at him at this very moment, saying *Oh my, what will I do with this one?*

I'm a freak, he thought. *Why do I understand?*

Then remembering that he too was a microcosm and that he too encompassed and enveloped many more like him, his sobbing stopped. He looked up and started to smile. Elation swelled inside him. Those like him weren't here, at least not *now*, but he recalled, *time is all at once and forever. So they are here with me, need not be lonely.*

He darted back to the window and stared longingly at the sky above, specifically at one particular star. It was *his* star.

Reaching for his telescope, (not that he had an actual telescope), instead he curled his index finger to his thumb to make a circle, peering out into the sky ... and yes ... he could see it, a dim grayish tone, really just a tiny spec. He calculated its distance at 137 million light years and its age to be 300 or so million years old. He remembered being there a long time ago, millions of years ago in another form.

Staring at the star, he squinted and let his vision dim ... he could use his own eyes to zoom in and see millions of miles, a trick he had learned.

He looked closer and closer ... until he could see ... himself ... on the star ... a very long time ago.

Hello me, he said.

He watched himself turn and look back at him, and yes, they recognized each other. And as with two opposing mirrors they grinned at each other in infinite reflections.

Can we share this moment?, they whispered. And they danced about, in the infinite dance of the universe, gazing into each other's eyes.

There are so many of us, they all thought.

I love you, he whispered. *I love you too*, he whispered back. Infinitely, they all echoed back, *I love you ... I love you ... I love you ...*

Peering in through another window across the room, someone holding a shotgun was watching this man with the shaved head. For the man with the shaved head, hours, weeks, maybe years had passed. But for the man watching, it was only a minute or so. The man with the shotgun watched the shaved-head man, dancing and laughing.

“Strange-assed bird” whispered the man with the shotgun, “Friggin’ weirdo.”