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Mr. Hosler

Creative Writing

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The Wall

It stood so tall in the sky the burning hot sun of the early afternoon was completely eclipsed, a shadow engulfing me and the field below. Various shades of red bricks ranging from firetruck to crimson deep peppered the foundation, deliberately layered with the finest execution. I figured someone must've paid some very talented architects to construct the monster that stood before me. I looked around, wondering if anyone else could see the brick wall. How could it possibly have gotten here? In the middle of this field?

"G'day to you too."

I turned to my side, searching for the voice that just broke my thoughts. It was a singular man sitting cross-legged on the grass staring up at me with an eagerness. A void black suit dawned his shoulders with a loose white button up shirt and an untied tie was left hanging around his neck, and I wondered if he even knew how to tie it. He seemed tired, as if he'd been sitting there all morning, perhaps even for days. His hair was the same color as mine: jet black that appeared lighter in the bright sun. The only difference was his hair was much longer, hanging messy over his ears and his neck.

"What?" I questioned.

"You must've not heard me. I said 'good day'."

“Oh, uh, good morning.”

“Is it still morning?” He checked his watch, which I noticed had a long crack right down the glass. “Ah, I suppose it is. Couldn’t tell when the sun’s out this high already!”

“Yeah, I guess that’s true.” I let out a friendly chuckle.

The man glided his fragile eyes away from me, staring intently at the brick lining in front of him. We remained there together in a moment of silence.

“Uh, excuse me, uh, sir...”

“Jack. My name’s Jack.”

“Ah. oh- okay, Jack, might I ask you what you’re doing?”

“Sitting.” Jack rested his chin on his left arm, propped up by his knee.

“Just, sitting there? Are you waiting for something?” I stepped closer, intrigued.

“No.” He shook his head slowly.

I let out a small *humph*. The man bewildered me, almost as much as the ginormous wall in front of us.

“Do you know why this wall is here?”

“No.” He replied nonchalantly as if on a loop.

I glanced up, once more searching for anyone in sight. The field was devoid of anyone else, and I eyed around the corner of the wall. Nothing stopped me from walking past it.

“Alright then, well I’ll be on my way now, if you don’t mind.”

“No, you can’t leave.” Jack turned towards me with a half grin, the other side of his face drooping. “You can’t.”

“Why can’t I?” I asked, my voice a little louder now as I began to become frustrated. This man was strange and has given me little help.

“You cannot get past the wall.”

“Why not?”

“You can’t, you’re stuck.”

“What do you mean?”

“I said what I said. You’re stuck.”

His eyes seemed to tell the truth and the bags under them gave the impression that I was not the one with the knowledge in this exchange. Perhaps he really was sitting here for days. Maybe even more than that. For months? For years? Would that even be possible? I looked up at the wall before us. So tall, so triumphant, towering over everything, ruling us all...

“There isn’t a way to get around it. That’s why I’ve decided to take it upon myself and take a seat on the grass. There isn’t any point in trying, ain’t there?”

We locked eyes for a moment, a sadness washing over me.

“But, I have to get around, I need to get...”

“Where? Where is there to go?”

The man had me puzzled, and I could feel the sorrow fill my lungs. What could I even do? The wall had appeared out of nowhere, a divine intervention from some cosmic being stopping me from moving forward. I was unsure of how much time had already passed, and how much more could. I hung there for seconds, maybe even minutes. The warmth of the sun I had held on to began to seep from my body, the shadow pulling me in tight. I hugged my sleeves,

losing sight of my hands in the darkness. I shivered and rubbed my arms, shaking cold from the frozen plains, paralyzed, stuck in a state of stasis. There really was no hope, was there?

Chirp chirp. The tweeting of a bird whistled over ahead, the quiet air filled with the sweetest sound of music. My legs, which had begun to buckle, stood back upright as I searched for the bird. There it was, high in the sky, almost completely covered in shadow by the sun. Following as it flew, the bird soared around the wall, the sun striking it as it passed. The bird was the brightest thing I'd ever seen, and I watched it in awe.

"That- That bird! It could go around the wall!" I declared.

"The bird doesn't have to worry. Of course it can." Jack spoke, facing the wall absentmindedly still.

"Then how come I can't get past?"

"You just can't."

"I don't understand. If the bird can, so can I!"

"I'm telling you," Jack turned towards me with a crazed expression, "you can't make it past the wall."

"You know what? I'm sick of you! I'm going around that wall! Watch me!"

"Stop! It's not *possible*. The wall won't let it happen!"

"I'm walking!" I hollered over my back as I crunched my dress shoes into the grass.

"You won't get far! You won't make it!" Jack cried, his voice shrinking as I walked, and walked, and walked.

The distance, which seemed like a few feet just before, grew larger with every step I took. My legs felt heavy, weighing me down like I was walking through quicksand. The wall grew

smaller and smaller, stretching further off into the horizon away from me. I was almost there, I knew of it. I'd been walking for miles, my feet growing numb, and I felt the cold finally slithering its way through my body. Jack's voice faded into oblivion as the roar of the wind blowing past consumed all sound. I felt I couldn't go anymore, but I knew I had to. I had to keep walking. My eyes wavered, my body ready to collapse. I could feel the end coming, but I wasn't ready to go. This stupid wall was the thing that could take me out? How deeply depressing! One damn brick wall! I felt my body fall, the wave of fear in my stomach grabbing me with such a hold, my eyes shut tight, all energy seeped from my body...

It happened in an instant. I stood still, the fresh air tasting sweet and the warmth of the sun against my back, absorbed by my black suit. *Chirp, chirp*. The bird I had seen before was gliding above high in the sky, heading behind me. I blinked rapidly, the moments of the past coming back to me. I spun around to find the towering wall, to find Jack. The sun blinded my eyes, the bird now eclipsing the sun in the spot the wall used to stand. The wall was nowhere to be seen, the vast fields stretching before me, empty and desolate. Looking down, I saw a small bush wavering in the wind, shriveled up and dry. So meaningless, a tiny speck compared to the stretch of green that surrounded me.

"Jack! Are you alright?"

A voice called for me, her footsteps approaching.

"Yeah, yeah I'm good, I'm good."

The image of the wall stood tall in my mind, seemingly unbreakable. I wasn't sure if the image would ever leave my mind, but all that mattered was it was gone today. Straightening out my suit and adjusting my black tie, I turned to hold her hand, ready to walk forward. In the

distance I saw the rest, walking along, facing their own brick walls. The service was about to begin.