

Nihilism on Aisle 7

The Story of the Meaningless Tomato

The rain stopped, it had completed its task, it had watered the crops just the right amount; it was ready to die. There was no funeral for the rain. Nobody was saddened by its departure. There was a silent acceptance of what it had accomplished for the world, but no mourning for its passing. It was here just a moment ago, blessing the lands with its watery goodness, and now it was gone.

The lack of rain felt as natural as its presence. The fields were wet then as they had been when the rain was there. In those fields grew the ever voluptuous vines, with their thick, juicy, green stalks. It was on those vines that our story began, the story of a lone tomato and his fight against the superficial bullshit of modern philosophy.

His name was Edward. The tomato, that is. The tomato's name was Edward. He had seventeen brothers and sisters, though nobody could tell who was a brother and who was a sister. They were tomatoes. This is very important to note, seeing as most of the story revolves around the fact that they were tomatoes, neither orange nor orangutan, just tomatoes. Among these sibling were some of the most plump, red tomatoes on which any passerby had ever laid their eyes. They were beautiful.

But Edward would have none of it. Poor, ugly, little bastard. Edward stuck out on the branch of his family like a sore thumb. It was fairly obvious with just a glance which tomato was Edward: he was the third one down on the second branch of the vine. He was the one with the slight orange tint and his siblings would always hassle him about it.

"Hey 'Orange guy'," they would say to him. "How does it feel to be so orange," they would

ask him. He had grown accustomed to this, mostly because he simply did not give a fuck. Edward did not care about his siblings, he did not care about his branch, and he did not care about his vine. Edward just did not care about a damn thing. The tomato was completely apathetic about the world.

On one particular afternoon, the rain stopped. It had done this before, but this time was special. One of Edward's siblings felt so inclined as to point out the death of the rain:

"O what a tragedy," she exclaimed, "that the rain should die with not so much as a few words of departure."

"It's not like that," interjected another, "the rain is here to do a job and naught more."

"Well, I think it quite depressing," his sister continued. "People really ought to care for the rain more. I am certain it had feelings too: it comes and it goes, it weeps and it woes."

But none of the other tomatoes felt the same as she, they all thought it absurd that she cared so much for the rain.

"If the rain comes and goes, does it really die?" They inquired of her.

"Does it matter that we mortal tomatoes pay any mind to the immortal rain?" They begged of her.

"If we were to praise the rain as we do the sun, would it provide for us any more than it does as is?" The questions were beginning to become a bit more of taunts, thought Edward.

It was as if they were not tomatoes that summer. They bickered and argued as humans would. Some acted above others. A family was clearly defined by the vine. A place they all belonged.

But they were tomatoes, and tomatoes live tomato lives, in tomato places. Not much can be done to change the order of things. They were tomatoes and they would live as such.

The roaring could be heard across the field. The Haroldsons and the Eriksons spread rumors about it. It was a lion coming to claim a pride, they claimed. A storm preparing to embark on a thousand year reign, they gossiped. None of it was true. The truth was more realistic, because it was real unlike the tales spun by the families of tomatoes.

The farmers were harvesting. They would soon cut away the idea of the families each tomato held so dear, all the tomatoes were just one field to them. The tomatoes' once vast realm would soon be a massive bin of all their red selves.

The hopefuls thought it mustn't be true. The farmers have done nothing but feed them and treat them well, why would they suddenly turn on the tomatoes?

Edward accepted his fate. He made no attempt to fight with reality. He did not need to make amends with the world. He was content just being as he was: a tomato. And a tomato he was.

Other tomatoes began to speculate about the harvesting. Some said it would kill them all, others thought it to be some sort of rapture. Most feared the worst, but once again, Edward just did not bother with them. He knew that whatever was to happen would do so regardless of whatever the tomatoes thought of it, and so he did not think of it.

This tomato, Edward, preferred to think of much greater topics, such as the way the clouds wisped in the wind far above all he knew. Or the way the sun reflected on the windows of the distant house. He was perfectly fine analyzing these trivial details of life.

Then the day came when Edward's neighborhood was eaten by the harvesting thingamajig. The

screams of his family and neighbors echoed past him as he was taken in by the massive machine with its tender, loving arms.

It was dark after the harvesting. Edward could not see a thing wherever he was. There was a murmur in the crowd that was compacted in some sort of container. A muffled rumbling could be heard day and night. Edward was bothered by the noises, but thought it best not to get worked up by it. He no longer had the clouds or the house to look at, he was going to have to find some new hobby.

There's not much for a tomato to do, you see, especially when he's lost his beloved clouds to watch. He began just listening to the distant huffing of what could only be an engine. It was calming to hear the chugging as consistent as it was.

Time was nothing to these tomatoes, they had no way to measure it and no reason to care for it, but they all felt as if they had been in this darkness for an eternity. There was no end in sight, no hope for freedom. Many had begun to think they were dead, this is what they deserved for leading such meaningless lives, some sort of diving punishment. Edward decided it was best to just cut himself off from reality, to just dream until he was released from this void.

And so he did.

When he awoke there was light everywhere. He was sitting on a throne of velvet from which he could see his new home. This new land was filled with rows and rows of thrones just like his. And in this throne he was to sit and wait. For what his did not know. He merely waited.

It was whilst he waited that he began to die. Slowly, as we all do, he died. Fading away in that throne of his. He died as he had lived: with no meaning at all.