

The Relationship Was Doomed From The Start

We hear it all the time. Oftentimes, when a relationship in our vicinity ends, especially when the two participants are not on amicable terms anymore, there is always a few "experts" claiming they always knew the relationship wouldn't work. It is usually evident that these claims are no more than a mere veneer of vanity, but still, it begs the question. What do these people gain from it, or rather, what do they *seek* to gain from it? Respect? Admiration? Perhaps a boost to their ego from equally vain people? Food for thought.

Alas, we are not here to discuss the oddities of our society, but rather two particular characters found in a work of fiction. And it would be a great shame to choose a relationship one might possibly encounter in real life when in this case, the only limit is the creativity of someone else.

So for Today, we turn our eyes towards the relationship of two Snakes from the Metal Gear franchise, which contains books, comics and, perhaps most importantly, video games. Now, there are ten people known under the codename Snake in the Metal Gear universe, so it is important to clarify, what Snakes are the topic today.

First of them is Naked Snake, more commonly known as Big Boss or just Boss. In his early appearances, he is presented as a legendary warrior, but as the years go on, he descends into darkness and becomes widely considered to be a terrorist and madman, all in pursuit of a dream of The Joy, his mentor and only maternal figure.

In the 1970s, Big Boss built a mercenary base in the Costa Rican sea. Its purpose was to provide refuge for soldiers abused by their nations and to help the oppressed, who lack the military power to defend themselves. But when a nuke was brought to the base, the mercenary group has become a liability in the eyes of the world and a man filled with hatred used the opportunity to strike. A fake inspection by the IAEA was used to place explosives on the struts of the base. The base sank and with it, most of the staff. The Boss only narrowly managed to evacuate with his friend and a medic. But during an aerial ambush, his helicopter collided with an enemy aircraft.

The medic threw himself in harm's way, but both suffered major injuries and fell into a coma for almost nine years. During his time in a coma, the medic underwent mental reprogramming and a series of plastic surgeries to turn him into an almost perfect doppelganger of Naked Snake.

After Big Boss awakened, the doppelganger was brought back into the world as well under the codename Venom Snake. Permanently injured, missing an arm and in much more pain than Big Boss ever was, he was used to replace the original, while the real Big Boss abandoned everyone he knew and left for Zanzibar.

It became the phantom's responsibility to deal to revive their old organization and take vengeance on the man who crushed them nine years ago.

Both of the Snakes eventually learned about the existence of the other one and became fast friends, with Venom being loyal to his idol/mental template and Big Boss having respect for the doppelgangers sacrifice.

But it was not meant to be. Of course, we can't really tell for sure, but if one was to have a clone and the clone became vastly more successful than the original, wouldn't the original want to claim his phantom's achievements? Even worse, what if your doppelganger takes your revenge?

It was evident their relationship could not last, in fact, it was doomed from the very beginning. The town isn't big enough for the two of them, so to speak. One day, the egotism and hatred of Big Boss were bound to take control and have dire consequences for Venom.

For the first few years, Venom had no idea he wasn't the original, which worsened the situation. He was there to deal with the pain of loss, to have his revenge and to finally come to peace with the new world. When Big Boss contacted him, he accepted his fate and continued playing his part on behalf of a still very vengeful man. A man, who hoped hatred might someday replace the pain, but it never went away. It made the man hideous, inside and out.

And so it was that one day, Venom was killed by Solid Snake in a mission spearheaded by Solid's father, the real Big Boss. It would take two decades for Big Boss to realize his mistakes, but at that point, it was far too late; all their friends and acquaintances were already dead and Naked Snake was soon to follow.

This shows us that, perhaps, two equals might just ruin themselves by simply being the same. That two goods, albeit with some undesirable traits, might just make a wrong. And that, apart from a threat to life, a threat to identity is the most effective way to change a man.

It also shows us the importance of having good people around oneself. Who knows how would've Venom ended, if he wasn't surrounded by the friends of Big Boss, who guided him whenever he was unsure or took him in hand every time he was about to become a slightly more morally gray character than he originally was.

When he and the mercenaries started rescuing child soldiers, Venom was not above using them as Motherbase staff before his friend Miller suggested that instead their guns should be taken and they should receive a basic education.

But Big Boss wasn't surrounded by people who would give him boundaries, not at all. For the most part, he was alone or surrounded by strangers and he was free to succumb to his darker traits.

To conclude, let's ask and swiftly answer some questions. Would the existence of an almost perfect doppelganger change us? So long as we are exposed to that person, most likely. Will it be a change for the better? That's hard to say, but probably not as

it threatens our own identity and self-worth. The 'better you' is an attack on our ego. Is a relationship with our doppelganger doomed from the very beginning? Yes, yes it is. I highly doubt that anything good might come from surrounding ourselves with our clones.

But for now, this is nothing more than a parable. We can't clone ourselves now, we can't make perfect mental doppelgangers, so we needn't worry about this just yet, but the moment we have the ability to do that, god knows what happens.