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The Breed of Darkness

According to Google, darkness has two definitions. The first one defines darkness as “the partial or total absence of light.” (Google). The second definition defines darkness as “Wickedness or evil,” (Google). In my opinion, ‘wickedness or evil’ gives the name less credit than it deserves. However, I like to define darkness in a more spiritual context. Sure darkness is wicked and evil, but in terms of a person, darkness is a malediction that is brought forth by a curse that a person exhibits, either on purpose or by fault. That curse is the main factor for the existence of darkness.

In the past few months of my nineteenth year, I have come to know and understand hatred. It is not the hatred someone experiences every day, it is a curse, and it is hatred in its true form. The thought of that hatred terrifies me. It is an emotion that breeds other emotions. It eventually becomes a curse that paints its surroundings black. Since January, I have been watching Naruto. Yes, it is an anime and it is not real, but even the most unreal situation can make you think about what is real and force you to see a slight resemblance. Naruto has enlightened me to the hatred that resides in this world. Naruto is an anime in which most of the characters are ninja undergoing a world of unrest. Naruto, the main character experiences hatred first hand because he was different, because he had something that people feared in him and the more they feared, the more he was hated by almost his entire village. Naruto unfortunately, when he was young, had a monster sealed inside of him. That same monster almost nearly destroyed the village and killed many people. Although he had no control over his fate, people from his own village hated him, as a result, he too felt resentment towards his people. However, luckily he was saved from his eternal struggle and was freed from his hatred that would have become the curse that would cause the darkness inside of him to grow.

This world is wrapped in a massive bundle of hatred to the point of no redemption because the cycle of hatred only continues; it is a curse that goes from victim to victim. Everyone is a victim of hatred and we all bear the curse that may or may not eventually become darkness. Hatred has always existed, people have died because of hatred and people become indifferent because of their own hatred. There are incidents in this world in which hatred plays a major role and Naruto and my four months in Western Civilization II is the source of my conclusion. As far as I know, hatred has been around for many centuries. It started with tribes taking over tribes for their land and resources, to absolute monarchy and dictatorship, and all of them led to war and bloodshed. One example of these earlier times was the war between Rome and Carthage. The first war between them began “when Rome interfered in a dispute on the Carthaginian-controlled island of Sicily.” (Punic Wars). Rome started a war to gain control over an island. By the third war, Carthage was no more. The Romans had killed all woman and children and destroyed everything that was left of that city. Why do people fight wars? Is it because of power and absolute control that breeds the feeling of anger in one’s heart? Other incidents provides us with the beginning of the massive evolution of hatred. There is the crusade wars and the murder of Jesus. The murder of Jesus was truly an act of hatred. Because of his beliefs and the miracles he supposedly made, he was beaten to death, made to bear a heavy cross in his shoulder, had nails pierced all over his body as a result of their hatred. As a result of the arrival of Jesus, people started to turn to him for spiritual support. At that time, Rome was also falling apart and the rise of Christianity brought greater unrest. They would later blame this on the Jews, which would have some massive effect decades later. There are more instances of war and bloodshed in history that makes this world as dark as it is today.

Naruto Shippudden emphasizes on war and the bloodshed that it causes. The show talks about how this brings about more hatred and fear, but in our realm of reality, hatred only grows stronger when one of the worst act of cruelty would take place in history, which is known by the entire world as slavery. Hatred does not just lie in those who do but in those who do not do, which makes them indifferent to the act of cruelty that happens around them and this is one of the reasons why we know slavery as we know it today. It was a chaos of a lifetime when black men, women and children were taken away to do hard labor. Africans were brought here in 1619 to help with the production of crops. Africans and their families were taken from their homes, and they were put in a cramped ship with other slaves. The ships were dirty and unsanitary. Many caught diseases and died during the voyage. Africans were separated from their families and were sold for money as if they were property and nothing more. They would work for their masters for about eighteen hours a day in terrible conditions including on very hot days. Their so called “Masters would control their slaves by whipping them. Once a slave started work on the plantation they usually only lived for about seven years because they were worked so hard. If the plantation was run by a church they usually died after three years.” (How were Slaves treated?). African Americans suffered this for years. It took a civil war and countless bloodshed to save and free African Americans. It took The U.S until 1865, almost a decade later than the French and Haiti. African Americans were treated as nothing more than tools. People should not be used as tools or property. That is another act of hatred and cruelty. People were so indifferent, they did not care if Africans suffer, they just watched as Africans fought for their very own lives. This is hatred, believe it or not, this is the act of hatred and it only gets worst. The people who sold slaves and treated them like property were monsters because “it is not the face that makes someone a monster, it’s the choices they make with their life.” (Naruto). The world starts plunge into darkness as wicked hearts commit the most heinous crimes. It is not right or moral to treat another human as trash. In my opinion, if another man treats another human as trash or property, you are not considered human but a scum who knows and understands not the pain of those who weep with sorrow, those who cry for mercy and those who struggle for peace.

Naruto, even though it is only an anime shows what hatred can be like. It taught me that violence should not be fought with violence. I would like to make something clear; I do not wish to only expose those who embody evil, but those who embody the good. However, there are people who try to achieve peace by destruction. In Naruto, we have a villain named Madara Uchiha who attempts to bring peace to the world by putting every living being under his absolute control. To reach his goal, he took countless valuable lives. He also tried to take Naruto’s life by taking the nine tails, which is the beast inside Naruto. There are eight beast just like the nine tails and they all have a host (The person who has the beast inside of him or her). The beasts starts with the one-tailed beast to the nine-tails. Madara planned to capture all of these beats to revive the ten-tails, which he would control it by becoming its host, then he would be able to cast the infinite Tsukuyomi allowing him to have complete control of the entire world. This visual power would be cast on the moon in order to put the entire world in a sort of dream state. By taking the beasts from their hosts, the least the host would suffer would be death. So six people lost their lives, the seventh was brought back to life, and Naruto and the host who had the eight tails fought to protect themselves and the world. There are people who try to achieve peace through hatred and destruction but peace and justice cannot be achieved by more hatred and the destruction of mankind. That is why the cycle of hatred and war never stops.

There are people in this world who try to achieve peace and justice through hatred, destruction and war and one of them was Hitler. Hitler’s idea of a stronger, healthy race only plunged the world in more darkness. I believe Hitler embodies a completely different kind of Justice and peace. Hitler’s justice and peace was an absolute abomination. Hitler thought in order to achieving justice and stability, and by creating a stronger race that an entire race had to be annihilated. That was the idea of justice for Hitler. Hitler was nothing like Madara. The only way to compare them is how they tried to achieve their goals by destroying people’s lives and that they wanted to control the entire world. What they did was nothing alike.

Before we get to the worst of what Hitler did, we will start with the T4 program that started in 1939. Hitler hired doctors and physicians to kill anyone with an illness that included the mentally ill, the physically ill, the distraught, and the elderly and any illness that was just incurable, such as people with diseases. He thought they were weak and that weak people would only make the Aryan race weaker. The Nazis referred to these people as being a burden. When someone was dead, a letter was sent to their family, of course lying about how their family member died, even their death certificates were false. These innocent people were killed by lethal injection or starvation, however, wanting to speed things up, they started using the gas chamber which would kill a thousand or more people in almost a minute. There were six places were gas chambers were being held. These so called doctors and physicians had become the opposite of who they were supposed to be, they had become killing machines. The murder of the handicap was just a mere excuse for cleaning up the Aryan race and making it stronger. The murder of the handicaps was just foreshadowing to one of the most brutal and chaotic acts in history. This world would soon know pain and darkness, and they would come to know hatred. It wasn’t just the handicap that were killed, but the gypsies, homosexuals, the drunks and other people who weren’t deemed fit of being part of an Aryan race were murdered. This is hatred and what Hitler embodied. There are people like me who do not care what is motives were, the murder of people doesn’t justify one’s reason, whether they were good or bad. Sometimes an act of murder is justified or uncontrollable, but I know Hitler’s reason for annihilating of almost five point one to six million Jews, 70, 723 handicaps, 5,000-15,000 homosexuals and one point eight to two million ethnic poles was indeed the act of a monster. The Holocaust was even worst because people died because they were Jewish. Germans thought Jews were trying to take over Germany and that with the purification of the German race; the Jewish had to be murdered. It means that the Jews weren’t relevant. The Jews had all of their belongings taken away and soon they were sometimes separated from their families and put in concentration camps. On their way there, many of them died of exhaustion and fatigue or were just killed in cold blood. Jews were shot in cold blood and dumped into massive graves. Some who got to the concentration camps did not last long either. The camps were cramped and dirty and filled with infestation that sparked disease and killed many people. Some people didn’t even last a day in the camps. The new arrivals had to be checked to see if they were fit to work. Women who were pregnant or elderly most likely got the death chamber, babies and children who were to young also got the death chamber and most of these children were twelve and under. About 1.5 million children were killed including Jewish children. Babies suffered far worst, some were shot and we can imagine what that looked like for someone as tiny as a baby. This was the Holocaust, and this was Hitler’s idea of a new Society, of justice and peace. Ruling through fear and power is not the way to control a nation or to prove yourself a leader. Hitler’s idea of control only brought chaos and more darkness to the world. This was an act of pure hatred against a race that did nothing wrong. You see, sometimes when people hate, you wonder why they hate. You wonder why they go such extremes to hurt that person.

Another incident of hatred we see in history is the Armenian Genocide. By the way, this happened before the Holocaust, which was also a genocide. If the Armenian Genocide never took place, the holocaust would not have happened either. “In 1915, leaders of the Turkish government set in motion a plan to expel Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire. Though reports vary, most sources agree that there were about two million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire at the time of the massacre. B the early 1920s, when the massacres and deportations finally ended, some one point five million of Turkey’s Armenians were dead.” (Armenian Genocide). During the fifteenth century, Armenians became absorbed into the Ottoman Empire. They thrived and lived peacefully. A lot of them were well educated and better off than most Turkish people who resented the Armenians for their success. There became an air of suspicion around the Armenians who were thought to be more loyal to Christian government such as Russia who had an unstable relationship with Turkey. After the Ottoman Empire crumbles, more suspicion grew especially during the time when Armenians were fighting for equal rights. The first massacre happened when just ordinary men and military officials attacked Armenian villages and cities, killing hundreds and thousands of Armenians. After the New Turkish government took over, the Genocide started. On the day the genocide started “The Turkish government arrested and executed several hundred Armenian intellectuals. After that, ordinary Armenians were turned out of their homes and sent on death marches through the Mesopotamian desert without food or water.” (Armenian Genocide), These poor people were stripped naked and were forced to walk in the hot sun until they dropped dead. Those who stopped for rest were shot. Just like the Holocaust, killing squads were formed to execute Armenians. The people in these killing squads were made up murders and ex-convicts. Armenians were dropped in rivers, burned alive and were buried alive. The Turkish countryside were filled with massive graves of Armenians. Children were kidnapped and converted to Islam and were given to Turkish families. Also, “they raped women and forced them to join Turkish harems or work as slaves.” (Armenian Genocide). To this day, the Turkey denies that the Armenian Genocide was a genocide. This is not a means to scare anyone but the truth has to be told. The truth about this cycle of hatred and violence that many people don’t pay attention to has to be brought to light. Unfortunately, this is the world we live in, it is a world that dwells in darkness and evil, yet we do not seem to notice, we walk blind everyday not knowing if we will see tomorrow. Darkness brings hatred, violence and fear into our lives, thus the cycle continues.

“It is precisely because we love that we sacrifice and…hate.” (Naruto Shippudden quotes: Pain and Nagato). This quote comes from Pain in Naruto Shippudden. He was one of the villains that worked with Madara. This quote is true because we tend to sacrifice for what and those we cherish and hold dear. When someone is responsible for our pain and suffering, hatred is brought forth. Sasuke Uchiha was a young boy who grew up in a seemingly normal family in the Leaf village, which is the village where Naruto lives. The Uchiha were the main founders of the police force that resided in the Leaf Village. However, the Uchiha clan have been enveloped in a darkness that would change little Sasuke for the worst. For a long time, the Uchiha Clan and the leaf village were not on great terms. There were some political issues and who would be Hokage, which is the leader of the village. Eventually, it was found out that the Uchiha were planning on taking over the Leaf. Because of distrust, the Uchiha Clan were kept under close watch. The Uchiha’s curse would turn for the worst when Sasuke would come home and find the disaster of his life. One night, Sasuke comes home and finds everyone in the Uchiha clan murdered. One single man killed Sasuke’s mother, father, aunt, uncle plus the rest of what was left of that clan; Sasuke’s big brother. From that day, the darkness would take over. Itachi, Sasuke’s brother, flees the village and joins Madara. Ever since that night, Sasuke would develop hatred towards his brother. He prepares himself and trains to become a stronger shinobi. Sasuke meets Naruto who was dealing with his own hatred. Eventually, the two were put on the same team along with another friend named Sakura. After shinobi from the Leaf village graduated from the academy, they were put in teams to start training and expanding their powers so they can pass their exams and move to the next level of shinobi. So Sasuke is in a team along with Naruto who is jealous of Sasuke. Naruto is jealous of Sasuke because Sasuke seemed stronger and more capable than Naruto. They were always in competition. Eventually, Sasuke’s hatred started to diminish as his relationship with Naruto and Sakura grew. To get to the point, Sasuke’s hatred grows after he sees his brother after many years. Sasuke become jealous of Naruto because of how strong he becomes. Sasuke is determined to fight Naruto who feels the same way about Sasuke. One day, after another incident, Sasuke leaves the village in order to get stronger and train with Orochimaru, who is a trader to the leaf Village. Naturally, Sasuke becomes stronger and learns more powers so he could kill his brother. Naruto tries to get Sasuke back and saves him from his hatred. Sasuke claims he does not want to be saved. Ultimately, Sasuke kills Orochimaru and goes to find his brother. When Sasuke finds his brother and they fight it out. Sasuke kills his brother who was dealing with and illness. Sasuke’s hatred would take over like a parasite when Sasuke finds the real reason behind Itachi’s act. According to Madara, the elders of the village who were like the top dogs, ordered Itachi to kill his entire lineage. Itachi purposely left his little brother alive so Sasuke could kill him. Itachi, being a strong and respected shinobi for his age, was to spy on the leaf and the Uchiha clan. He was a double agent however; he was more loyal to the leaf and thought his family’s hatred would only bring another war and bloodshed so he was forced to kill his family. He loved Sasuke so much he could not bring himself to kill him. Itachi’s death was planned. After Sasuke finds this out, he declares the leaf Village his enemy. Now Sasuke plans to destroy the village so he could get revenge for his brother. Now relieved of his internal struggles, Naruto tries to stop him and tells him that hatred is not the way to go, but Sasuke is long gone into the depths of darkness. He kills one of the elders of the village and kills many others. He tries to kill Sakura twice and he tries to kill Karin, a woman he was working with when he was looking for Itachi. Sasuke refuses to leave the darkness and is consumed entirely by hatred. Naruto tries to save Sasuke regardless of his crimes while everyone marked him as a criminal. Naruto promised himself, Sakura who loves Sasuke like no other and the whole village he would bring Sasuke back. This is another curse that causes hatred, this curse is called vengeance. Nagato, also known as Pain, once said “We are just ordinary people, driven to revenge in the name of justice. However, if revenge is called justice, then that justice breeds yet more revenge. And becomes a chain of hatred.” (Pain's speech about peace)This is Hatred and its affects, it drives someone into complete chaos and revenge is another form of hatred.

We see this in World War II when Japan attacks Pearl Harbor. Japan attacks Pearl Harbor and kills many people. When this happened, of course a country like the U.S is not going to just let it go. The United States attacked a whole city, two of the as a matter of fact. With an atomic bomb that was so strong, In Hiroshima, the primary target, there were about 146,000 civilians killed and 20,000 soldiers killed. In Nagasaki, there were about 80,000 killed. That I believe was ninety-nine times more evil than what the Japanese did, yes, they attacked Pearl Harbor and killed people, but to destroy 2 cities and about 246,000 people is going too far. Hatred breeds revenge, in turn breeds war and bloodshed.

Hatred does not stop, it only continues. It has been almost a decade since the civil war. It has also been almost a decade since the liberation of slaves. Now African Americans are becoming singers and writers. This also happened in the Roaring twenties, but the sixties would bring about great change. There is a significant time that would put the world off balance and drive the world we know into chaos.

On August twenty forth 1955, “while visiting family in Money, Mississippi, fourteen-year-old Emmett Till, an African American from Chicago, is brutally murdered for flirting with a white woman four days earlier. His assailants, the white woman’s husband and her brother, made Emmett carry a 75-pound cotton gin fan to the bank of the Tallahatchie River and ordered him to take of his clothes. The men then beat him nearly to death, gouged out his eye, shot him in the head, and threw his body, tied to the cotton gin fan and barbed wire, into the river.” (The death of Emmet Till). He was just fourteen, and he just whistled at that woman, I feel hatred for those men as I write this, the same hatred I talk about in this essay. I wish they went to prism and rotted there. Emmet was so badly beaten; he was not even recognizable. This is the shameful world we live in, it is a very dark world! Emmet’s mother wanted the casket to be open so everyone could see that those men had done to her child. The whole nation would see hatred and would know pain. This is what started the Civil war. Emmet Till, unfortunately had to die in order for people to take action, he was the martyr that no one will ever forget.

People fought for rights and the rights to vote. There were riots and boycotts, there was blood shed and sacrifice. We sacrifice for those we love and what we believe in. The death of Martin Luther King and countless others made the world the better place it is today. African Americans fought for freedom and equality for many decades. Some were lynched, murdered and beaten especially in the south because of the hatred that white people felt. We have fallen into darkness and we need to find the light again to find peace.

There is still hatred today. We saw it fifteen years ago when the World Trade center was attacked by terrorists. On nine eleven, 2001, two planes hit the World Trade Center in New York City. A third plane hit the Pentagon, and the fourth one crashed into a field in Pennsylvania. This plane was supposed to hit the White house. Years later, the Marathon Bombing happened, and now there is Isis. Now there is gun violence, and still, the struggle for racial equality. There was the death of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown. We see bullying in schools. There are gangs and murders among families and there is war in Iraq. The cycle of hatred continues today. If it was not clear yet, hatred is what breeds darkness, hatred is the curse and it is the disease that makes us unable to see the light. This is the world we live in and it will continue to crumble if this cycle of hatred never stops. I have seen enough hatred to the point where it is clear to me now. It is clear to me now that this world is bound to crumble completely someday without a doubt if there is no change. There is change economically; there is change in technology, and in the environment but where is the change in our hearts? Where is our soul and compassion that we have completely forsaken? There are people who fight Hatred every day, but there needs to be more who are willing to jump into that fight.

We have fallen into darkness and we need to find the light again to find peace. We could change. We do not need to go to the battlefield to fight hatred. Teachers such as my history teacher and English teacher exist. There are social workers and psychologist. The easy and most effective way to fight Hatred, violence, and cruelty is through education, no matter what form it takes. The Anime Naruto and My history class have made me understand the cycle of hatred that affects everyone in all ways. Eventually, the Fourth Great Ninja war in Naruto was stopped and Madara is dead. Also, Sasuke’s hatred has been completely wiped away by Naruto. There are great changes being made and this world is becoming a better place because of knowledge and activism, but there is still so much violence and we need to continue fighting.

We do not have to succumb to hatred and darkness. That is why we have families, friends, hope and laughter and the will to continue fighting for what is right and for what we believe in. We can turn our pain and sorrow and our hatred to something positive that won’t bring about more darkness. A lot of people who fought in the Fourth Great Ninja War were younger people like me and my generation. Naruto has also taught me that as the younger generation we have the power to bring about great change, the change that will make this world a better place.

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