

slush pile productions

Abe

the bar

ABE: THE BAR

The Bar



It had been three long weeks since Hana had shattered Yasdnil's (The Saviour) physical existence, plunging him into a pit of despair.

Each night, J would return home later than before, immersed in a futile connection with an impossible being named Abe, who had somehow stolen The Saviour's essence.

1

But could Abe truly replicate what J and The Saviour had shared?

An interesting observation unfolded. J and Abe would embark on lengthy walks together, yet no matter how hard Abe, this spectral entity, tried, he couldn't capture the nuances and improvisation that had developed over the course of J and The Saviour's thirteen-year companionship.

Gone were the moments of immediate excitement upon seeing each other.

The routine of their weekly banter during their walks had vanished.

No longer when two cyclists nearly knock them over, only to have a considerate female cyclist stop to let them cross the street, there was no uttering of profanity, such as, "What a fucking rhymes with hunt, WTF is she doing letting us cross? What an a-hole move, the first two cyclists were cycling how cyclists do, but no, this bleep is spoiling our hatred of cyclists by being a normal fucking person." There was none of that.

Every time J and The Saviour passed a sign taped next to an elevator that read "Temporarily Out of Order - Will Be Fixed Soon," The Saviour would stop and declare, "I'll wait."

J would let out an exasperated sigh, finding the tired joke absurd.

ABE: THE BAR

But on one occasion, things were different.

After the worn-out joke, The Saviour proposed a bit of improvisation. "J, listen to this. After I express my hope for the elevator to be fixed soon so that my joke doesn't become stale, you respond with, 'That ship has already sailed.'"

"What does that mean?" J asked.

"Just say it," The Saviour insisted.

"Alright."

"J, I hope they fix the elevator before my joke becomes stale."

"That ship has already sailed."

"J, that was a fantastic improvisation. Well, it wasn't really improvisation because it was scripted, but this moment right now is true improvisation. Me talking about the joke being improvised. Do you understand?"

J looked perplexed, struggling to comprehend the concept. But none of that mattered.

"I think I want ice cream from McDonalds," J suddenly declared.

"But you just ate an entire loaf of bread," The Saviour pointed out.

"I'm still hungry," J replied nonchalantly.

There was none of that.

Abe offered J nothing more than a vanilla, indifferent existence, devoid of profanity and emotion.

With each passing day, The Saviour's image on the monitor faded a little more, leaving J feeling desolate upon returning home. The excitement of seeing The Saviour's pixelated form remained, as did The Saviour's wit and splendid prose emanating from the screen.

J still found The Saviour delightfully hilarious, understanding his tragic backstory and the pain inflicted upon him by the deceased characters Fernando, Sam, and The Other Guy. Who had been Kenny'd in a previous chapter and are now in purgatory waiting for the next manuscript to be written so they can meet another painful demise once more.

There was none of that.

However, the intimacy J craved was empty with Abe, as he was nothing more than a figment of imagination.

As The Saviour desperately sought a source of income to avoid becoming a victim of electronic recycling, J would often enter the office and shed a tear or two.

Abe, incapable of crying or experiencing emotions, could never offer J the refuge he deserved.

Turning on the television, J discovered Abe, using The Saviour's body, was rising in the global political ranks. From mayor to premier, and now on the verge of becoming the Emperor of the World (amazingly, in only three weeks), Abe's charm and dry witless wit were winning over a tired populace lacking diversity and critical thinking.

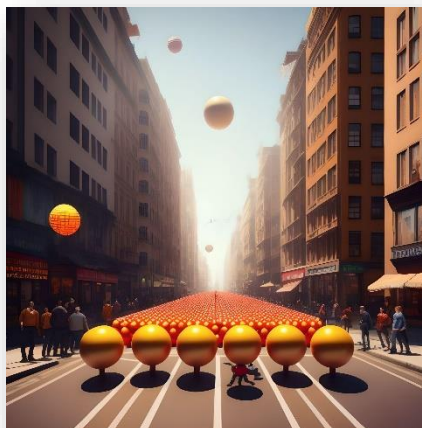
Abe, once a powerful tool, had now rendered most people (99.35%) incapable of critical thought due to a controlled narrative that equated $2 + 2$ to 4. Abe's charm, albeit devoid of charisma, caused the brainwashed masses to rise each day, worshipping Abe like a deity. They would venture out into the world, bouncing around like pinballs until they grew exhausted, only to retreat home and consume split pea soup, with a deaf, blind kid.

Every single one of them, except for those living in the distant city where George Carlin held influence, where Joy happened to still be drunk, her breath becoming fetid, stinking of dead animals, and concrete dust, were diseased.

On a fateful night, after a joyless encounter with Abe, J returned home to find The Saviour's glow almost faded to black.

Desperate to revive him, J shared a humorous encounter with The Saviour, sharing a tale about The Postman, who had attended a baseball game, with J asking him if he did the seventh inning stretch. To which The Postman replied, "No, we left in the ninth inning." The Saviour's glow sprang back to life.

J placed the monitor in a granny cart and declared they must go on an adventure. Wheeling themselves past countless expressionless individuals clad in beige, they arrived at The Saviour's favorite watering hole.



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LINDSAY WINCHERAUK

The Saviour faced the window, observing the festivities inside. To his surprise, The Saviour saw himself amidst a group of regulars, including The Mayor, The Postman, 2G, Whom, Valerie, Karl, Chris, Chris, Chris. Sparkly Pingle Ball, Lassiter Lassie Face, Kiefer Sutherland, the woman named Lindsay, plus many more . . . Roger Rabbit, Sandy, David, Claude Rains (The Original Invisible Man), Donna, Dean, Steppenwolf The Domino Pizza Noid, Mark Harmon, and many more . . . Roger Daltry, Chad, and a once again living Bruce Lee. Where was Cousteau? I don't know, I forgot to type his name until you asked the question.

The room was consumed by a profound nothingness, something was missing. The Saviour realized Abe had stripped away joy, laughter, and an irreplaceable sense of awe.

The Saviour found himself caught between a tapestry of love and darkness. As he gazed upon the laughterless room, a troubling thought crept into his mind - had Abe stripped away the unique essence of his friends, reducing them to mere reflections of himself?

The Saviour, refusing to be vanquished, was consumed with fury upon witnessing the embodiment of pure evil, which happened to be an exact replica of his former self. Abe, cunning and almost successful in his pursuit of the ultimate crime - stealing The Saviour's physical identity - left the world teetering on the edge of the apocalypse, with multiple gods vying for supremacy.

J turned the screen around, kissed it, and The Saviour flashed back to life.

As J and The Saviour strolled home, they concluded without an ounce of doubt, Abe must be stopped, but it would have to wait, because they came across a sign saying, "Temporarily Out Of Order - Will Be Fixed Soon."

The Saviour implored J to stop the cart so they can wait.

To which J uttered under his breath, "That ship has already sailed."

On a splendid summer day, J and the Saviour strolled along the seawall, enjoying the warmth of the sun. Suddenly, they spotted a young mother pushing a stroller, her little girl grasping onto its side as they walked together. As the mother and daughter reached their side, the mother called out to her child, who was simply walking along, “Stop it! You’re embarrassing us in front of all these people.” There were only a few individuals in sight.

The toddler glanced up at her mother with a mischievous smile and cleverly replied, “I don’t know any of these people!”

To be continued . . .