

DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

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My debt to society has been erased. What I mean to say, is that there is no one left to pay my debt to, since there is no longer any society.

In fact, all debts have been wiped out for anyone who was left alive, and who owed anything.

No one is in control, there is no government, no infrastructure, no shops, no offices, no schools, no hospitals, no malls, no bowling alleys, no police stations, no grocery stores- all wiped out, long gone.

There are survivors, obviously. Those of us that got lucky and were in the right place at the right time when the missiles came.

No one knows what became of the other side. All we know is that as soon as we detected the Iranian warheads on their way toward our soil, the President gave the order to send our counterparts their way in retaliation. Then, of course, the proverbial shit hit the fan.

If there is a provisional government, we are unaware of it at this point in time.

We've managed to scrape together a ragged community of sorts, currently living off canned goods raided from the local grocery stores and warehouses.

We patrol our perimeter with guns. Some of us have automatics, like A.K.s and pistols, mostly 9's, glocks, and brownings.

So far we haven't had any problems with local or out-of-town crazies-slash-criminals, but in a situation like this, where local and federal government has for all intents and purposes disintegrated, it's only a matter of time before the warlord mentality overtakes some of the more extremist groups around the area. Those and the already existing gangs, who were out of control long before the 'big bang' happened.

I have no doubt that in this case, we will soon discover the definition of the phrase, 'Only the strong survive'...

It's funny to consider that what was on everyone's mind in the days before IT happened, was this exact scenario. It seemed like a kind of latter day romantic notion that some even kind of looked forward to, but now that it's finally here, there isn't a damned thing appealing about it.

You turn on the radio- nothing but static, and why waste the batteries? You turn on the tv, same thing.. Again, why waste the rapidly waning electricity?

Some of the hydro plants are still operational, but for the most part, we are in a 'brown-out' situation- most parts of the city are dead, or not far from it. No traffic lights at night anymore, those have long since died out. No flashing or blinking lights on any of the buildings, which stand mute and dark, some reduced to rubble, stark reminders of the broken down pride of a civilization that went into decline long before its greatest potential could have been realized.

Our government couldn't save us, and neither could our religions. I imagine the churches still have outposts that are full of refugees from the Great Disaster, but they are more like missionary outposts now than the full-blown religious institutions concerned more with building bigger and better universities and church buildings than reaching out to our local destitute and homeless.

Welcome to the shoe on the other foot, my friends. Now we are just like those bag ladies and gutter winos we made fun of all those years- we live in the gutters and push around broken down grocery carts now, just like they did before the nukes hit us.

Wherefore shall we lament now? If God was on our side, how come we didn't win this one? Then again, I don't think either side won, as the extremists who waged Jihad on us are most likely dead or in ruin the same as us- God wasn't on their side either, I suppose.

But who said God approved of our battles over resources, like land and oil? Maybe I don't think like the rest of my fellow human beings, but if I were God, I don't think I would have concerned myself with such pointless meaningless displays of hatred and narrow-minded behavior either...

At some point, you just throw up your hands, realize you've had enough of the constant and stubborn stupidity, and you walk off and leave them to their own devices...

I remember the political rhetoric before the war started, and the political rhetoric that continued even after several years into the war- and even after it developed into WW III, when Korea and Iran decided to jump into the mix and create what was described by our current (or last, as the case may be) administration as 'the modern day Axis powers'..

So the ‘moderates’ went over to Iraq to kill the ‘extremists’.. I have to wonder what made us think that we could change an entire region of the Middle East’s mindset after centuries of practicing a lifestyle that our Christian religions basically don’t comprehend.

Nothing was going to get changed over-night, and diplomacy got short-changed once again in favor of the violent ‘short-cut’ the military leaders always seem to be in favor of.

Generals chomping at the bit to go try out their new technological toys on some third-world country whose governmental structure we didn’t approve of. So we were going to jam democracy and ‘freedom’ down their throats, whether they wanted it or not.

I remember a phone conversation with my cousin before everything fell apart- he was in Iraq, training the locals in police techniques. He said, ‘we’re going to drag them kicking and screaming into the twenty-first century if we have to’...

Well, nobody’s laughing now, I gather. We’re all too busy scavenging for bits of food and clothing and shelter, and protecting what little we have left from the roving gangs to be worried now about meddling with international politics- and I rather doubt that we have any more international contact at this point...

Welcome to the new Dark Ages, my friends. Your best friend will now be your automatic weapon, because you will be able to trust no one outside your tight little community of local family and friends you’ve known all your life. All strangers are now automatically assumed to be the enemy unless or until they prove their intentions beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Tribalism once again takes root in the place of the destruction of the dream of globalization. International commerce? Say goodbye to that- I don't know if our borders are totally locked down, or if there is just no one left to defend any of those borders. I don't know- if there is no national identity left over, is there still such a thing as a border?

Or are we left with the ancient concept of territory, like the Native Americans once had? That no one can really 'own' the land. It's true that one can only stand in the same spot for the span of his or her life, and then that spot must go to some one who will replace us after we are gone. That's the extent of our ownership over anything in this life.

But while we are here, we have the choice to either defend what resources we have access to against all others who would or might take what we possess from us, or we can choose to wander free like the nomadic tribes of old, taking only what we can carry with us, and roving over the landscape in search of something, or maybe evening nothing at all, our ambitions going no farther than the journey we are on.

My god, what have we wrought?

Maybe we were just a bit too hungry, maybe a bit too greedy, and a bit too amoral to care how we got what we wanted. And now our karma, that heavy-handed iron-fisted bitch, has come home to roost at last.

Now comes the nuclear winter of our discontent...

Age has not left us with reason or maturity, but it has left us with regrets, empty promises unfulfilled, and untapped potential drained, pissed away in the heat of a moment we can never go back to, because in real life, there are no 'do-overs'...

It's always the ones that already have almost everything that decide they have to have more, isn't it? I voted, but what good was my vote? What does it matter now, as my world has been thrust into a hell beyond reason or compassion by those who couldn't see beyond the narrow confines of their political and religious insanities?

Maybe God should have scrapped the whole project and started over again from scratch. Who knows?

Now comes the real test of humanity. We are no longer living the dream- we are living the nightmare. I wonder what the Japanese think, now that we have our payback- great cities destroyed in an instant by missiles from beyond our continental shores.. rather like the bombs we dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Thousands of innocent people dead, incinerated to ash, tens of thousands dead soon after by radiation poisoning.

Instant hell on earth. How could those scientists in the thirties know that the splitting of the atom would bring such a devastation to the face of the earth? And all the invention of Science, that great Equalizer, since then brought not only technological delights, but technological nightmares, as well.

Now our civilization has been destroyed, we've been blasted back to the feudal age, where

local personalities decide by the might of their fists and their weapons who rules, and we will go back to a post-apocalyptic fiefdom, paying tribute of goods and services to the strongest among us, just like it was back in the good old days of the tenth century A.D.

Many of us have all gone 'home', wherever that is. Those ones will never have to live by fear and suffering again, since they are no longer with us in this world... One almost envies them that their suffering is over, before our darkest days have descended upon us.

Trials and tribulations, just as the good book predicted over two thousand years ago... why did we have to try so damn hard to make it come true? Couldn't we have just heeded the warning signs, and learned something from our mistakes, and gone on to actually evolve into what we were supposed to be?

Yet, even now, we still hang onto shreds of hope. Hope that the dark clouds overhead, the ones that never seem to disappear these days, will finally break apart and let the sun shine through and warm us a little.

I can see flakes of snow starting to drop as the world settles into another icy year, the temperature slowly dropping season by season.. Is this just another planetary phase, or is our earth finally dying on us? No more global warming, now we've shifted in the opposite direction, and soon, not enough firewood in the world will be able to keep us from freezing to death. If the radicals and the crazies don't kill us first, that is...

Like Pink Floyd said in a song once, I'll see you on the dark side of the moon..

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