

The Has-Been Who Never Was

I am sure that throughout history, there has existed genius as great as any who have ever lived who never pursued their genius. Musicians as great as Mozart who continued to work as accountants. Artists as Skilled as Valasquez who died in battle before they could raise the brush. Visionaries brilliant as De Vinci who could see five hundred years into the future, but were too shy to make their talents known to the medici of their time. Talent and ability are the better part of our arsenal of weapons, but without the boldness and self assuredness to stride forth and call attention to our achievements by those very achievements, to display Genius, the genius that could cure cancer or fly to the moon, or to simply recognize the obvious finally, as Giotto did, and to paint the sky blue. To develop the lens, leading to the microscope and telescope, the discovery of the cell, the atom, the solar system, from observing a morning dew drop on a leaf and its optical properties of magnification. Do you really think that Van Leeuwenhoek was the first to take notice of a dew drop and how the veins of a leaf appear larger underneath one? The talent to create music that brings us to tears, that encapsulates the needs of a generation or transcends the centuries is playing in somebody's head right now, who will never write that score. There are painters as great as Goya who could jar their times, upset their societies and mirror the world for what it is, but lacked the courage of their convictions to suffer as Galileo for declaring the truth that the earth rotated around the sun, to spur mankind further, talent that could and I am sure has in some men and women, remained hidden to those around them and to history, and perhaps, even to themselves. The history of art, of science, the investigations of nature learned by direct observation, the genius and application of the metaphor are built on a curious hunger to understand, explain and to survive. The sharp canine tooth in our mouth which tears the flesh which we eat and nurtures the body, being metamorphosized as an arrowhead, extended on a stick to increase our reach, flies through the air and strikes down our prey. Sheer genius. The greatness that has been amongst us is more than just the talent to possess that greatness. It is the burning passion, the inner fire to understand and to explain what this is, who we are, by producing something which will make our unique view of the world understood to ourselves. Genius doesn't give a rats ass what anybody else thinks. When days and months are lost to self indulgence and denial, to fit amongst our peers, we succumb to the season of weakness when our creativity stagnates, and that vision we had, that unique explanation which we once required is lost to the world forever. Time passes, and the work we may have done today, but didn't, will not be done tomorrow because we change and everything around us also changes. The need to create begins to dissipate, and the great work we may have done remains undone. We will not only have cheated ourselves, we will have cheated our species. Our genius and creativity are not mere ornaments to be taken for granted, when few enough of us possess them, but must be recognized as the gems of our existence, the jewels of our genius, our explanation to god and ourselves of who we are and what we are. If we do not create, we destroy. If we do not explain what this is, and who we are to ourselves, that knowledge of our failure alone will be enough to kill us. An ignominious death. We will be known as the has-been who never was.

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