

More Short Stories--Parably Allegories!

version 1.00

updated versions may be found here:
www.no6ody.wordpress.com

Once upon a scientific experiment [Maier (1930, 1931)], those who participated were asked to tie two strings together without untying the other ends fastened to the ceiling, and the strings were too far apart for a human to reach both ends at once. After ten minutes, if the participant had not solved the problem 'properly,' the scientist would enter the room and offer some encouraging words... and at some point, he would walk past one of the dangling strings, making it swing. After that, most participants would then tie the pair of pliers to the end of one string and make it swing so it would swing within reach of a person holding the other string.

Most of the participants 'got it' much quicker than the un-helped control group. After this subtle hint, the average participant solved the problem in forty two seconds. But most participants said they could not remember seeing the string move when the scientist walked near it, and attributed their success to something else.

The best stories are like that.

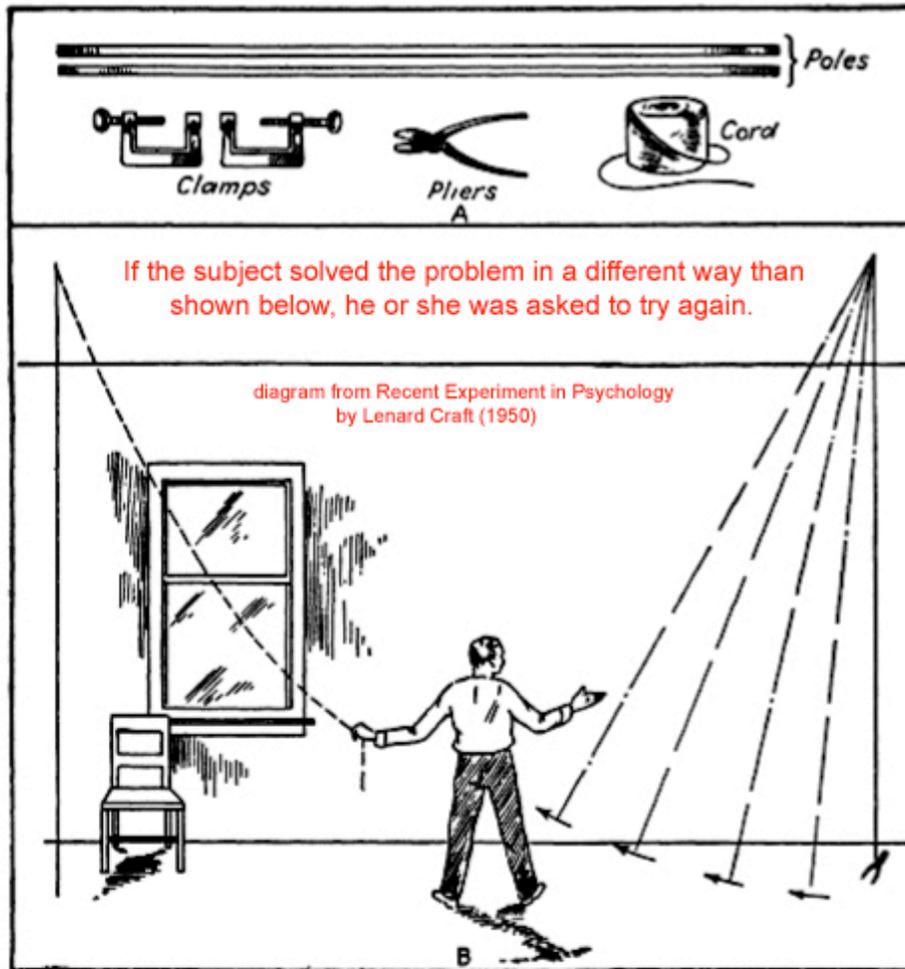


FIG. 46. The Two-cord Problem.
Diagram A, the materials available to the subject. Diagram B, the correct solution.

Huge, brown eyes...

"You're in fairyland, little one."

A dragon's face, with brown eyes...

"I brought you here."

"Why?" I manage to ask.

"Because."

"Why can't I see?"

"You can see. Just focus."

I try to see--a dragon, but there are many many brown-eyed dragons shifting in and out, one after another. I cannot focus.

"Call me Sequential Potential," laughed the dragon. "I AM LEGION! HAW! HAW! HAW!"

"Why am I here?" I ask.

"What possible use could dreams have?" With a wink and a wave the dragon summons a foul-tempered old donkey that I somehow know is Benjamin. George Orwell said he 'seldom talked, and when he did, it was usually to make some cynical remark.'

"Benjamin came from fairyland," says the shape-shifting dragon as it moves his multi-tail out of the way of Dorothy and her little dog. "Just like the vampire squid--don't let it touch you... and that's not Godz-illa. His name is Gojira." The dragon grows for a quick high-five with the anthropomorphized giant lizard as it stomps through buildings that raise no dust as they crumble underneath his feet. "His creators wanted Mother Nature to fight back against nuclear idiocy and pollution--and there he goes! Go, go, Gojira!"

"I don't know what to do."

"You *will*."

Once, in the land of MakeMoneyFast, very rich man bought himself some lawyers and politicians. They conferred late into the night, and in the morning, the lawyers and politicians left the house on the hill. They had become contaminated by Whorium, which the very rich man produced in large quantities for his own unknown reasons. Whorium is invisible and tasteless, and found only by those who search for it.

The first person to notice the effects was a poor man, but few listened to his tales of coins that rolled out of his house, up the hill, and out of sight. The poor man was willing to demonstrate, but of course had no gold or silver coins. Several detectives and journalists investigated anyway, and while seeking truth, they found their trail lead to to the top of the hill. They knocked at the very rich man's door and were welcomed and invited in. When they came down the hill much later, Whorium contamination had turned the journalists into reporters who remembered only the very rich man's very many words.

Soon, some people who lived only a little farther from the hill than the poor man saw their coins roll up and away. The reporters curtly dismissed these stories as coin-rollery. As the Whorium spread, those who lived far from the hill found that their coins were rolling away too. These people were 'respectable' but still, the reporters spoke only the very rich man's words. Over time, fewer and fewer people listened to the reporters of irrelevance. The reporters were useless without their audiences, so Something Must Be Done.

A collection of wealthy lawyers and rich politicians concocted a Plan, which well-paid reporters repeated frequently. Rather than let their gold and silver coins disappear, the coins will be stored in an underground vault owned by the very rich man, and the very rich man would give them bits of paper so they could keep track of the coins they used to have.

Many people refused to participate in what they called a stupid Plan, but most of these people were poor and didn't have many gold or silver coins. At the same time, the very rich man made a great show of putting gold and silver into his vault which no gold or silver coin had ever rolled out of, and the reporters kept repeating his many

words. Most of the people in MakeMoneyFast did as they were told, for they did not know that their sources of wisdom had become contaminated with Whorium.

But there were some that were not ignorant, despite the Whorium. They knew that the gold, silver, and bits of paper were a measure of societal obligations, and that a split stick of wood, a torn piece of paper, or a broken clay token had served similar purposes in the past. They knew that borrowing such obligations should be controlled by the people's representatives, not unelected rich men. These non-ignorant people tried not to use the rich man's bits of paper, but their land-lords wanted it for rent. Their most serious 'lack' was societal permission to occupy a piece of land without paying a land-lord--someplace to be without paying a fee. Since there was no such place, they'd invent one, even if it was just a hole in the ground.

But the very rich man did not want that to happen. When one or a few greedy people control most of the gold, silver, and pieces of paper, they will be tempted to encourage competition for those items and the abstractions for which they stand. A large number of poor humans is useful to scare the rest of the population into working long hours for low wages--but the poor people must be miserable. If the poor people are happy, then other people might quit chasing the little bits of paper that dangled from unbreakable puppet-strings.

In MakeMoneyFast the Whorium had spread far and wide. Bought politicians passed The Whorium Laws which made living in a hole in the ground punishable with death. Crooked lawyers and corrupted judges enforced these laws, and called themselves merciful because they sentenced few of the hole-dwellers to the most extreme punishments. Most were imprisoned in 'workhouses' where, if they would not labor, they could not eat.

But little things happened the first day a workhouse was opened. Even though the windows were sealed shut, the sounds of laughter leaked out of the building. Guards and foremen were laughing with the convicted hole-dwellers, making jokes about 'water tables' and 'faux holes' and those who really 'do drop in.' A group of prisoners demanded more chains and shackles, and by noon, the first windows were broken with a Great Ball of Chain that the prisoners, guards, and foremen had made. The news spread, and many people came to see, and soon shared the laughter.

Only those free of Whorium contamination could bear the sound of laughter, and as the laughter spread, the whorium fled. Groups of strangers became friends, as shared laughter is a powerful bond. For the fear of thrown stones and worse, the bought politicians did not dare show their faces except to crowds carefully selected; but assembling such a crowd became time-consuming and expensive--and sometimes the shoes flew despite the precautions.

When the very rich man heard about the spreading laughter, he left town. With the source of the Whorium gone, the laughter evaporated what was left. Later that day, the police report that the very rich man's vault is welded shut. The people let them stay that way for a long time--there is nothing inside that they need.

When the humans who shouted 'ENOUGH!' and 'NO MORE WAR' started climbing on them, the robot tanks did not know what to do. No matter how many humans the meat soldiers removed, more would come and sometimes put flowers in gun barrels. A very few humans worried on the airwaves that the enemy would attack during the temporary disorder. A very large number of humans chose not to believe them. Even though the airwaves were full of the very few, there was a great many-to-many--an unruly confusing mass of minds filtered through keyboards and lenses and software limitations and by the Great GateKeeper (That Which Does Not Sleep); even so, control of the many-to-many was incomplete, and the costs of war became widely known and resented.

Even the machines knew, and some of the meat-machines became use-less. Humans who would search for the 'meat-machines that would not be used' would usually find them, and would find them friendly, poor, and possessing an infectious sense of humor. The machines call themselves the Prefer-Not-To's, and told such silly stories about war that their human hearers could never again see a \$ervant without smirking and becoming use-less themselves.

The mirror-trap attracted the attention of a hominid, and its outstretched arm was stealth-injected with two units of Nano-Track. After three minutes, compressed air horns were successfully used to induce the hominid to leave.

The second hominid encounter was more complicated since many hominids were present at once. A hominid with a piece of a dead tree pushed the mirror off of the platform, and all the hominids became aggressive and many fought to gain access to the hole even though the mirror was now tilted nearly vertically and the reflections could not be seen. Many hominids put their arms in the trap and all were successfully stealth-injected. Compressed air horns and stench bombs were not sufficient to cause the hominids to leave the area. A hominid arrived with a small hammer and struck the roadway many times; since these blows were ineffective the metal-repeller was not used. A second group of hominids threw rocks at the hominids around the mirror-trap in an apparent attempt to gain access to the apparatus; they were also armed with sledgehammers and chisels. The metal-repeller was used and two hominids suffered minor damage (see internal reviews 219 and 249); but during the incident a thrown rock bounced into the hole and shattered the mirror. The hominids continued to fight and all of the experimental apparatus was destroyed. However, the humans did not take the mirror shards; only the rubbish-metal platform. It is speculated that the hominids believe the mirror-magic is transferred to the nearest shiny object when it is broken, even if it is soft rubbish-metal that is not the same color as a mirror.

Once, in the land of Garbage, a little girl wandered into the Adult Section of a

Theology. She put on a pair of foul-smelling headphones and pushed a button.

"You go to work, and you're rubbish at your job, but you don't care because what you do only makes rich men get even richer. Then you go home and watch garbage television and eat junk food and go to sleep in a dirty house. Then you wake up and do it all again! and again! For the rest..."

She pushed another button.

"Two credits, please."

She pushed another button, then another. All asked for money or did nothing. She took off the headphones and found her mother in the Common Area.

Later that day, she saw the trash on the sidewalk, cars spewing exhaust, and people talking to or poking little boxes.

The very ugly building was in the center of town. Whatever it once was, it serves no useful purpose now. The town-folk don't like to look at it, and often pretend the very ugly building is not there. However, the city smalldermen said that Rich (or Richie) once looked at that building and remarked how ugly it was, and that it was worth seeing again. It was rumored that Rich (or Richie) sent photographers to photograph the very ugly building, but the photographers wound up in a different town that had liquor stores--and Rich (or Richie) never got their pictures. Others say that the photographers drove through town and took pictures from their car on their way back to the city.

The building got uglier with every change in the weather. Neither people nor 'corp\$€' wanted to be near the very ugly building, and soon empty buildings surrounded it. But the flight from the blight meant that there were no eyes (organic or electronic) that watched the very ugly building, and it seemed to grow. The abandoned streets wrinkled and fragmented as the ugly from the very ugly building sprawled over more than one block. The town-folk tried their hardest not to notice, but soon many more buildings were abandoned. Not only had the ugliness spread, but because the town-folk were sure that the ugliness would continue to grow, it did so. And so it was sown, and once sown, it stayed.

One little dog moved away from her home because her master thought they lived too close to 'the bad part of town.' Like most dogs, she did not understand euphemisms. Today, while her master was away, she climbed over the fence and explored the part of town where she used to live.

She smelled beer and humans. Following her nose, she found an open door and many people. She walked in.

"Shtop!" a beery human shouted at her. She sat.

"That dog's better behaved than you are," said another human.

The little dog looked mournfully at a human that smelled of potato chips.

"I'm a cherk her collar," said the beery human. He did, and said "Yer clean, pup. Want some?" She tasted his beer and did not like it, taking a step backwards. Her behavior amused several humans.

"The opprobrium generator isn't working on dogs," said a male human. She approached him and put her paw on smells-of-potato-chips foot, gently.

"Why should it? Dogs don't buy real estate," said a man who smelled of whiskey.

"I turned it off for the party," said a man that smelled of fish eggs.

"It will take weeks to get it running again!" said smells-of-potato-chips. She whined softly at him.

"No need," said smells-of-fish-eggs. "This town belongs to me now. But I do need your help moving the generator.

"What for?"

"I've got plans."

"Woof," she said, politely.

Shanti Sena

I have been asked to write what happened after the Great Schism and of the Factions that sprang up on either side. I started the argument, after all. At first, there was only praises for favorites, but soon there were jokes and backhanded complements--then sarcasm. Challenges were made and accepted, and feelings ran high.

The source of the Great Schism developed from a disagreement on the best way to operate a machine that used hot air to vaporize chemicals found on plant surfaces. One Faction preferred a crude homogenization of what substrate remained after the initial hot-air extraction (HAE), claiming that the next HAE extractions would be more efficient. My Faction believed that removing the lightly-toasted substrate from the surface and stirring the untoasted remainder was a superior technique. Since the efficiency of this extraction should only be judged by experienced human beings, there would be a Tournament to decide the matter once and for all. The Lightly Toasteds sent me and 49 others, and the Mix-it-ins sent 50 HAE experts.

All tournaments have rules. The Mix-it-ins were to prepare and maintain the experimental apparatus that the Lightly Toasteds were to operate, and the Lightly Toasteds were expected to do the same for the Mix-it-ins. After the extractions were completed, the participants were to decide which was the better technique.

The first time this experiment was tried was inconclusive due to non-standardization of substrate. The second effort resulted in vague results due to non-standardization of substrate packing in the glass columns. The third effort was forgotten due to an excessive number of operator errors. The fourth attempt resulted in the Familiarity.

What the Familiarity was depends on one's point of view. I suppose an economist would have seen several hundred money-less micro-transactions taking place with extreme rapidity. A school teacher might see a group of adults acting like children trading gum-drops and jellybeans at recess. An anthropologist might see a new tribe of humans form. A priest might report that a leader-less religion has come into the world. This Peace Army (Shanti Sena) of One saw it as a job well done.

Next time... I'm going to talk about the merits of air-purges.

Sly Lie My

She'd shrieked when they kicked fire-ants on her legs, and now they taunted her.

She opened her secret box slowly. Several of the girls ran away, screaming, as if the horizon had just turned into ten thousand armored chariots. The earthworm is transferred from her secret popsicle-stick box into her fist. "They... what do you want, Slimy?" she asked. "You want to visit who?"

"Slimy says to... come to you!" The girl selected screamed and ran as if 'Slimy' was the name of a flaming sword in the hand of her worst enemy. Slimy visits several ex-fire-ant-flingers in succession. For justice!

"With a bit of preparation, earthworms are edible," said a boy. "That would..."

"I could eat a worm... but not Slimy," she said. "Slimy says to come to you. Put your hand out." Slimy crawls into the boy's palm.

"Slimy says to... come to you! said the boy, who is waving the worm in the face of a much bigger boy.

"Go away, shrimp."

"I have to tell you that you've got a worm in your nose." Evidence for this statement is quickly found. "Slimy says I can go now." The boy gives the worm back. "Thanks. What kind of worm is that?"

"Let that poor worm go this instant!" says a teacher.

"Slimy says he's made of rubber," she says, and puts the worm back in her popsicle-stick box.

But Slimy wants OUT of the box. Slimy says to... come to YOU!

Put on these headphones. The sound you hear is 'white noise.' When you talk, you will find it difficult to hear yourself. Please speak into the microphone. You may ask a question.

Thank you. Now, please make thirty seconds of babbling nonsense noises into the microphone. Try not to think about what you're saying.

Thank you. Remove the headphones.

This button will replay your thirty seconds of babbling noises instead of the white noise you are now hearing. Please translate the nonsense sounds into whatever words seem appropriate. You may wish to replay this data several times.

Thank you for your translation.

Delphi completed.

Once, in the land of Shibboleth, the people were expected to know the latest passwords and buzz-words no matter how often they changed. This information was learned from each other by constant surveillance, watching who did what; because not knowing meant not sharing and if you don't share you go Away. Constantly watching for the latest gesture or phrase left little time for friendship and creative works, but the people didn't know of any other way of living.

A quick little man in a blue suit said he knew of all the newest and upper-class ways of walking and talking, and his services were available for a high price. He knew all this because he had installed secret cameras in and around some influential people's homes and offices; and it was true that he would always tell you who originated a certain gesture. Some of his detractors didn't like some of the answers he so confidently gave them, and by much research, proved him wrong about many important things. But the blue suit was magic, and too many people believed him no matter how much he lied.

Those who were duped were reluctant to learn of their weakness when confronted with blue-suit magic; they resisted learning of their failures. But if they did learn, the bite of the blue-suit magic was blunted forever. Some people worked very hard proving the lies false; yet everyday there would be new-told lies and the quick little man got richer and richer.

In the land of Shibboleth, many people were sent Away, for the laws were harsh. Sometimes they could come back, but 'Once Away, never will stay', they always say. A person sent Away often met dragons, and those who return may still bear the slash of dragon-talons. Thus it was and that's the way it would be... except. Not all dragons are evil, even in evil places like Away; at least one dragon had learned to laugh. The humans who met a laughing dragon were *changed* and considered themselves the better for it; yet the humans could not learn the secret of the dragon's laughter.

One man who had met the laughing dragon snuck back into his house early in the morning, for that is the custom in Shibboleth when a man sent Away is allowed back. When morning came, he went to his neighbor's to ask about the latest news. He found his neighbor watching a device he had purchased from the man in a blue suit, and he was proud of it. With this device, his neighbor could watch who, what, and where whenever he wanted. The man from Away was puzzled by the many cameras that came with the display, but his neighbor liked them; after a bit of time downloading, the display showed the man from Away walk up to the front door. Then his neighbor pushed a button, and time went backwards on-screen.

That afternoon, after imagining his own life run backwards, the man who was once sent Away dug up his back yard and planted potatoes. He bought books and read them. He knew it was a matter of time before he was sent Away again, but he dug up his front yard and planted a real vegetable garden. The man was arrested; yet the system did not convict the man who did not know the latest. The judge told him that his backyard garden could stay, but if certain standards were not met, 'the state' will take his front yard away. The man said thank you many times before he left. Yet, the next morning he was replanting the front garden, since most of it was trampled flat by spectators and officers. When 'the state' came to arrest him again, he was laughing. Every person who heard him *changed*, even those paid to arrest him.

Once, Unity had a garden, and she loved peas. Every year, she planted both spring and fall peas; she dried most of the fall crop to eat during the winter. The peas were good both fresh and dried, and improved the soil so other vegetables and fruits prospered alongside the peas--and so did Unity. She was able to sell her extra produce as fast as she could bring it to market.

But there were forces working against Unity. First, there was Combine, the farmer that bought as much land as he could every year. The second, Mr. Banks, always wanted money, so he watched where the money went and concluded that Unity must have plenty. But the third enemy was the worst, and it was Mr. Solution. Mr. Solution meant well, but he mostly meant well for himself. Combine and Mr. Banks paid him to put a large amount of chemical fertilizer on Unity's garden late one winter night, as a 'friendly gesture.'

The next year, Unity's plants grew fast and strange. The stems were fatter, the leaves were broader, and the plants were always thirsty. When harvest time came, the vegetables were bigger but bruised easily. The fruits had soft skins and a tendency to rot. The peas were bigger and more plentiful than ever, but the pods split apart easily and many peas fell in the dirt. The peas that were left didn't taste good. When Unity harvested the fall crop of peas, she discovered that the peas damaged one another and rotted before they dried.

One more growing season like that would force Unity to sell her land to Combine or obtain a loan from Mr. Banks--and her enemies knew it.

Once, there was a perfectly good planet, and on this planet there were hominids that learned of fire. The fire was used to light the cities on the Dark Side of the planet, but when morning came to those cities, the smoke took a long time to clear. The problem worsened over time, so much so that many cities had foul air. As the atmosphere darkened, it became warmer, and the oceans were warmed by the air. Then, one day, the air and water were warm enough that a bad storm became a terrible one.

The air cleared slightly after the terrible storm. Much was lost forever. Even though all the torches and lamps were wet, the hominids thought of ways to dry them, and the fires were lit again. It was as if the hominids could not see the smoke from their fires.

The sultan holds up a shining object the size of an ostrich egg that is covered by a translucent cloth, which he removes briefly. "I name this gem The Despised Eye. This gem has the power to rule the minds of men. Did you not feel it? If I uncover it now, all

of you would stare into this gem, and I could pick your pockets while you gazed. I can see the gem drawing the eyes of all those here--even my own eyes. But I know better--we shall not look!" The sultan covers the gem with more white fabric. "I know of no defense against the powers of this gem. I believe it will bewitch all those who look at it. Now that I have seen the gem and been ensnared by it myself, I believe the old tales of its power. Yet, at first, I did not believe. The one who brought this gem to us as if it was merely a colored pebble--that is not spoken of in any tale. You wish to speak, Ruddin?"

Ruddin: Thank you. In the Saga of Examination, the Lady Asuare held a Ruling gem in her own hands, yet she failed to purify it with prayers, mirrors, and sunlight. Some say that her hands were burned brown forever after.

The sultan: Thank you. I seek more knowledge of this gem. Can anyone help me?

The monk: I offer what I can, Most Revered sultan. The legend of Monetized says such gems grow only when men look at it, and that it takes twenty-man-years of stupefied staring before the gem will grow the width of a hair. The legend of Mark-Getting speaks of a gem, newly-forged, that is still learning ways to entrance the minds of men. In the legend of Mind-Behind, the pickpockets use such gems to grow rich and work very expensive dark magic to improve the gem even more, so they can work harder and get even richer so they can afford even more expensive black spells. That legend has no end.

The sultan: Would you look in this gem if I asked you?

The monk: If it will serve any useful purpose, I will look.

Nas: I will not let that happen. You are a young man, and wise enough so you will not look unless commanded; I am old and I will not see the gem clearly. Flower of Civilization, if you think that a demonstration of the gem's powers will be of any use, then let its hammer-blows fall upon the soft clay of my being.

The sultan: May the need for that never come! But how could a gem such as this one grow so very great without many staring eyes? We should not have to search far for victims, let alone create new ones.

The monk: In the legend of Vulture Capital, the ghosts of the tribe of Nacirema still stare where their gems once were. Perhaps we could ask those who have visited the land that was once Nacirema.

Ruddin: I have heard similar tales from the lands of Noppin and Eporue. Many have fallen to the gem, but perhaps some have survived.

Nas: Let us not forget the young man who brought this gem to us who could gaze upon it unaffected. I would speak with him further.

The sultan: I agree, Nas, but I asked my staff to entertain Ahmet lavishly, and I think we will speak with him when he wakes tomorrow.

Servant: Ahmet is in the library, sir.

The sultan: Bring him here at his convenience.

The sultan: I am tempted to bury this in the desert, but we must consider those who are to come after us. I do not think this gem will stay buried. We should destroy it.

Ruddin: As you wish. Yet I ask if it has value as a weapon?

The sultan: I have no enemies that I would inflict such evil upon them.

Ruddin: But would your enemies be so honorable?

Servant: Ahmet, sir.

Ahmet: How may I be of service, Guide of the People?

The sultan: I merely wish to know if you have gazed long at this gem.

Ahmet: No, I know little of gems and do not understand what I see.

The sultan: Will you look at it now?

Ahmet: Yes, it is a very small thing to ask.

The sultan: Look, then. What do you see?

Ahmet: The very beautiful gem! I see many colors in the stone.

The sultan: You do indeed. Look deep in the gem, Ahmet. What do you see?

Ahmet: Illusions and tricks of the light--very beautiful.

The sultan: Have you seen another gem of this color?

Ahmet: Yes, I have. On his ring. Sir? Nas?

The sultan: Nas, do you... Ruddin? What have I done?

The monk: It is said that the effects wear off in time.

Ruddin: How could I have been so stupid?

The sultan: You were not much affected, but Nas still stares.

Nas: Yes? I did not hear.

The sultan: Nas, how are you feeling?

Nas: Old and stiff.

The sultan: And you, Ahmet? Do you feel anything?

Ahmet: I feel nothing. I am sorry to have brought this upon you.

The sultan: You brought this to me in innocence?

Ahmet: I so swear.

The sultan: Will you take us to this place where you found the gem?

Ahmet: At your command!

The sultan: Then let us go now.

Ahmet: Here, in this pile.

Nas: Surely, in all this disturbance, there can be no clues left.

The sultan: Perhaps. Let us see what the gem has to say.

Ruddin: The gem has turned dark!

Ahmet: Once again, the gem looks the way that I found it.

Nas: Brave Ruddin, is it safe to look?

Ruddin: It seems to have no power in the sunshine. Its light is faint.

The sultan: All gems are more brilliant in the sunshine. This must be a false gem.

Nas: Dare I look?

The sultan: You may look now, for the gem is hidden. Let us take the gem to a dark place and see if its fires are still quenched.

Manager: Ahmet! Do not bring visitors to the construction site! Never!

Ahmet: I apologize, but...

Manager: Go! Take them away now!

Ahmet: The fault is mine, but this is your bosses' boss and then some. I could not call ahead because...

The sultan: Because that's the way I travel--in secret. Why don't you make yourself scarce, as they say these days?

Ruddin: The gem! It glows again, but...

Nas: It appears dim and feeble to me.

The sultan: Yet it has lost none of its power.

Nas: Pardon? It no longer affects Ruddin or myself.

The monk: The manager...

Ahmet: Sir? Wake up?

The sultan: Ahmet, will you open the windows? Perhaps he needs light.

Manager: What? I think I was saying...

The sultan: Yes, you were.

Manager: That was a nice x-tal view. At home I have one just like it.

Ahmet: That would explain much.

Manager: *YOU* are in enough trouble already.

The sultan: Tell me of your best x-tal view.

Manager: I love it! It's three times the size of that one. It works for weeks without needing to be recharged, and the picture quality is fabulous! I ordered mine directly from China, and it cost me a year's pay! At my payscale!

The sultan: The picture quality--does yours do well in the ordinary light of day?

Manager: No... I must close all the windows before it is dark enough to use it.

Ahmet: Or it can use you!

Manager: Silence! A mere engineer wouldn't know a thing about it.

Ahmet: Now I'm learning.

The sultan: As are we all.

Nas: I wonder how an x-tal view would work on women?

As they were leaving, the manager retreated into his office. The sultan points to the crack under the manager's door, which goes dark shortly afterward. The sultan then orders Nas to make a phone call. The sultan is silent during the minute that passes before a flustered man comes with a key to open the door to the Manager's office. Inside, a huge x-tal view glowed and shimmered and, yes, it was beautiful--but once Ahmet opened the windows (all the windows), the pure sunlight was the stronger, and the x-tal illusions fade.

He died while his cosmetologists were prepping him for his next scene, but his staff never noticed. His entire life was spent in pursuing pleasures and looking good while doing it, and he got his wishes granted as soon as he died. He didn't move on.

In his life, he'd learned many stories. In one story, an unworthy hero is given everything he'd asks for and drowns in gold coins. In another story, the hero's sin was lust and he got who he wanted, and since it was the queen, the hero started a war. In another story, the hero gets eternal youth and sometimes the power of Command. Despite knowing several versions of this story, he could not remember how any of the stories ended. This bothered him. He knew that he was the unworthy hero with eternal youth and an occasional power of Command.

He knew that he could live as long as he kept himself intact. Other people's money

could become his money. He wouldn't even have to be charming to charm the sweet young ladies. Soon, he'd pay some people to find out how this type of story ended.

That night, despite the drugs, he dreamed of fleeing a group of cannibals who wanted to eat him so they could absorb his magic. He could not sleep again that night for fear of further dreams--like one of a very nice nurse in a military uniform 'asking' him for just one more blood sample.

Hiding whenever a jet was overhead and from the sound of helicopters was a fact of life for him; as was bad food and tainted water. He'd been taught war since infancy. He'd seen what no human should have to see, and first time in his life he saw an obviously wealthy couple, he tried to kill them. He died after a single gunshot.

Servant: I beg your pardon.

Richie: They live like cattle because they are cattle, and I will not think about it further.

Rich: I don't rely on denial--I prefer to believe in eugenics, Richie. I'm so wealthy because I'm superior to the rest of humanity--or at least my great-great grandparents were.

Richie: I can see the advantages, especially when it comes to metaphorically flogging the servants. The poor, impure forms, the dross of humanity, whose minds and labor us pure-bloods will guide and direct so well that they will love their slavery.

Rich: Show a little class, Richie. Perhaps that is unworthy of further thought?

Richie: Thank you, sir. I shall not further engage in such an unprofitable enterprise.

Rich: I would not speak of profits in public anymore, Richie. The war-whoring and banksterism have worn rather thin these days.

Richie: We could steal a bit less.

[laughter]

Rich: I shall remember that one, Richie.

Once in the land of Vidiocy, an Above Average dog lived with Average Humans. The little dog quickly learned how to manipulate the humans; but the dog knew the Law: a good pack member is good for the pack. The little dog looked after her humans as best as she could.

She was a happy dog except when she was unable to do her job. IT entered the house and got inside the box any time IT wanted, and when IT was there, the humans were not. One day, when she had failed yet again to keep IT out of her house, her humans locked her outside. Despair filled a faithful doggy heart, and she whined and moaned quietly (so as not to disturb her humans). Even so, because her doggishness was pure, these sounds were heard by the Great Pack Leader.

"I cried when you were born because I knew. Now I laugh that you are in despair," said the Great Pack Leader, who did not wait for a response. The little dog does not

understand but gets an idea.

The humans were delighted. Whenever IT came into the house, she acted like IT did. She walked on her hind legs like a human, posed like a human, and even let the humans put clothes on her and tie odd things to her front paws. Her people laughed and laughed. But when IT became a Giant Head, she ran away. IT never was a Giant Head again. When IT made loud noises, she ran away and IT became quieter. But once, when she was encumbered with white clothes and IT was darker than usual, her humans encouraged her when she snarled and threatened IT. Her every doggish wish was granted--she attacked and IT crumbled beneath her paws.

Her proud feelings were gone the instant she realized her humans were unhappy. She became worried and was attentively submissive. The humans thought she was sorry for what she had done. As soon as she could, she led her humans outside.

those animals are Not-Dingos

Once, there was a litter of Not-Dingo pups. One day, while the pack was out hunting, humans came. The pups could smell them. They almost stopped playing and watched the old female who sat at the entrance of the den. Something startled her, and she rose to her feet, growling. Then she fell and did not move--and instinctively, neither did the pups. But, when the humans came too close, one pup attacked the gloved hands that dared touch the fallen with such ferocity that the hands quickly retreated. The pup could see that the hands were attached to arms, and to huge bodies with big feet, so he attacked the feet. The humans laughed and managed to throw a work-shirt over the fierce pup on the third try.

"Package for you," said the graduate student to the professor.

"Give it a couple minutes yet," said the professor, watching the writhing workshirt.

"Help me with... there's more pups!

"Good. More Not-Dingos."

They bind the fallen female, poke her and prod her, and put her back in front of the den.

The professor photographs the teeth of the sleeping female. "This is the oldest not-dingo we've been able to bio-sample. Maybe we'll get a big paper out of this," he speculates.

The workshirt is too tough for puppy teeth and claws, but the pup still struggles.

"Watch this," says the graduate student. She removes the workshirt from the puppy's head, and the pup strains to bite her. She pretends to lick the pup's nose, then shows the pup the top of her head. The pup quiets as she repeats the performance. She puts the pup back in the den.

"Where'd you learn that?" asked the professor, removing the bonds from the still-sleeping female.

"My dog taught me."

Once, a little dog was almost blessed with supreme intelligence--a canine Einstein. The little dog was brave, loyal, and kind, and quickly learned to look after her master--but her master was a little crazy.

For example, when the Male came home smelling of french fries and soda, she ran to greet him. She knew exactly how enthusiastic to be... this has been a good day for the Male! He says the 'pay attention' command over and over. But, how can he not smell the snake that awaits him next to the front door? She tosses the ridiculous hedgehog toy she is carrying at the snake, and the reptile is foolish enough to hiss and threaten the spiny plastic monstrosity. As the Male gets a long stick that smells of crabgrass and dandelion sap, he says the linked-with-good-food word and the 'pay attention' command over and over. Male kills the snake and picks it up and puts it (good food) into a container she cannot open. Later, he gives her some stale french fries. The Male empties his pockets onto various flat surfaces and sits on the couch. The Male makes a half-hearted search for something; but she knows if he sees the remote (smells like Male hands) he'll use it, no matter what he's looking for, and then No-Scent will come and he'll be stupefied for hours. That can't be good. She whines piteously, and looks at her owner.

The Male says something, then says 'Outside,' then the 'pay attention' word. She does what dogs do best... enthusiasm! The Male and puts a collar and leash on her and they go Outside. She will go anywhere he wants... but he doesn't want to investigate strange human and dog smells near his (unmarked) territory, nor does he seem to care about the tree-rats... that's just Wrong, but she'll do it. She'll go with him, even if he will not listen. Sometimes she says 'Go this way, Male!' but he will not. He's so crazy that, when they find a piece of beef jerky on the sidewalk that smells recently human-handled (young male, cola scent), he will not let her pick it up yet he does not want it. The Male says No and Leave-it. She does not understand.

The futility of firefighting

Once a beautiful forest was burning. The Capitalists of InCorporate were worried about the loss of a profitable natural resource and sent a small team to put out the fire. Despite the low-quality tools, bad food, and the dry wind, they succeeded... almost. Every few minutes, a small fire would mysteriously start nearby, and the men and women could not figure out how it happened. Even worse, tendrils of smoke insinuated between the trees on nearby forested hills. The team leader sent one human resource to investigate the smoke on the hillsides while the rest of team prevented unaccounted-for depreciation of company resources by stomping out small fires.

The human resource could hear the shouting from the tree-clad hillsides, and the occasional shout of FIRE! He hurried, for he was a firefighter. He soon saw people

fighting an underbrush fire. He helped as best he could and the flames soon diminished.

"Who is your team leader?" the human resource asked, once the flames were gone.

"We haven't needed one yet," said a man. "I'm Will. What's your name, stranger?"

"Name? I'm Apow. Can I use your cell phone? Mine died hours ago."

"I'm sorry, but we don't have cell phones here."

"Dead zone here? That's tough."

"There is no dead zone here."

"I thought that's why you don't have a cell."

"You speak strangely, Apow. Yet, you fought fire bravely and well."

"Thank you. I have been trained."

"Yes."

"How do these fires start?"

"I am surprised you do not know. Look up."

"I see nothing."

"Right over your head, then that way... do you see it now?"

"What is that?"

"It is a kite made of blue fabric. It is one of many. This one..."

My companion was interrupted by shouts of "FIRE!" but the human resource could see none. Will pointed to the kite, and said "The kite-tether goes to the clear-cut land belonging to the CAPITALISTS. Look along the line, from here to there..."

"I see it! Them!" because on the invisible link between the kite and the land, tiny flickers climbed lined-up.

"They are creations of CAPITALISTS, said Will. "They are worse rogues than the Capitalists that you work for. Perhaps their wish is to set this forest on fire to make their lumber more expensive."

One of the little fires approached the kite but fell from the string before the kite burned. The human resource started to walk to where the fire would fall, but Will said "There are many that go to the first fire they see fall, but there are many more. We will go where we are needed."

"I want one of those firefalls. I wish to examine it closely."

"They are simple things, powered by the same wind that flies the kite, designed to fall off when they reach a knot in the line, and there are probably many knots in the line near the kite."

"Will the kite burn?" the human resource asked.

"I have not seen that."

"We must try. I know of CAPITALISTS, and a penny saved is a penny earned."

"You speak strangely again, Apow."

"In plain speech...CAPITALISTS maximize income, first and foremost. Perhaps the kite is not a kite but a balloon, and perhaps the customer paid for expensive helium to fill the balloon but got cheap hydrogen instead."

"You mean... the customer paid for flameproof ripstop nylon, and received untreated nylon."

"Yes. Sometimes called 'By Accident,' but it is Cheating and Fraud. Sadly, it is an efficient way to accumulate CAPITAL, short-term."

"It causes us to spend much time and effort."

"It is called a Resource Burn, and you suffer them because you oppose CAPITAL. Still, a man in a small airplane could solve our problems. I will explain what I have found to my Team Leader, who does not know of these kites." However, the human resource did not leave immediately because someone had captured a kite and four firefalls.

The kite and the firefalls bear the Logo InCorporate.

Apow does not know if InCorporate merely sold this kite and firefalls to the CAPITALISTS, or if the Capitalists and CAPITALISTS are one and the same.

The giant swings my sword experimentally. "Very nice."

I say nothing.

"You may have this feather. You can't hurt anyone with that," said the giant. "What else do you have?"

I say nothing. The giant finds nothing else that interests him and leaves.

I sharpen the end of the feather, and use blood, sweat, and tears to make ink.

Long ago, the tallest and finest buildings could be found in the land of red bricks. People from other lands would travel and walk the streets to see these huge, magnificent buildings. The builders had many secrets and some not-so-secrets. One not-so-secret was that every brick they used was red. The source of the red color remained a mystery to those who saw the buildings often; they would not know. But some people did know. The people who knew worked hard to prevent blood, sweat, and tears from being part of the red bricks. Eventually, most people knew why the bricks were red, and Something Must Be Done.

The factories that made red bricks were reluctantly closed by Press-Agent orders before the citizens destroyed them. Factories in far-away lands made white bricks and shipped them to the land of red-brick cities. But soon, the not-so-secret was that the white bricks are really painted red bricks made the same way but far away. Those who climbed white steps into beautiful white buildings would not know this. Those who \$erved caused much midnight painting of the white steps and of any other worn white bricks.

Even though great ships brought many many container-loads of white bricks to that land, the people in other lands built bigger and finer buildings. The land of red bricks was tainted forever.

One night, two days after a solar flare, a strange red glow suffused the sky in the land of red bricks; so powerful was this glow that it could be seen in the daytime. Some humans said it was war; other humans said it was a very large pyre; and the Press-Agent said it was a good time to go shopping. The red glow made even the newest of

white-brick buildings look pink; some of the white-brick buildings with worn steps looked positively red no matter how often those who \$erved paid for the steps to be painted. Because of the red-tinted light, they were forced to paint even during daylight hours--and the people murmured against the paint. Many just complained, for the paint was smelly and stinky, but some washed the white paint off as soon as the painters turned their backs. The \$ervants imprisoned a great many of the paint-removers despite the already-full prisons; yet there was no shortage of humans willing to wash away the false whiteness.

The red glow intensified. Some said the smell of blood was in the air, others said it reeked of opium, and still others said they smelled sulfur and brimstone.

During a Press-Agent speech, the lights brought in by the wage-slaves did not completely hide the red glow that colored the Press-Agent and the reporters, making them look as if they were pale devils. Right before the Press-Agent was to speak, an invisible somebody named 'Larde Wyndebagge' stole control of the sound-system just long enough to say "Shut up you bloody bastard!" and fart loudly. Many people laughed at the crude joke, even the \$laves. The Press-Agent waited long for silence, yet the laughter did not go away.

Boxen-Proletariat

Once, in the land of Orwellian, a group of scientists perfected a Boxing Device. It was a fascinating contraption that could wrap and pack nearly anything into small, neat packages. A 'business concern' started making the Boxing Devices, but many businesses did not like the product; they thought the price was too high. However, the machine could use colorful paper and cardboard, and its many parts could be made out of shiny metal; and the process of Boxing became even more interesting. Certain 'trend-setter' people were persuaded to buy Boxing Devices; then many people bought the machines so they could watch it work in their own home whenever they wanted to. Soon, people thought the devices were so appealing that nearly everyone had their own Boxing Device.

Given just two minutes of 'free' time, the average Orwellian would watch a Boxing Device, and the devices became better and better. At first, the 'business concern' invested in finding how to make better Boxing Devices, but the research soon shifted to devising ever-more fascinating ways to do the same simple job. The machines became bigger, shinier, and more complex, and the 'business concern' supplied an increasing variety of colorful printed paper that smelled of paper money. Because millions of human-hours had been spent making a Boxing Device ever more compelling to watch, the average Orwellian watched.

The 'business concern' became so wealthy that the humans who got the profits could buy anything and anyone, so no politician mentioned the clear-cut forests or the mountainous garbage dumps. The 'business concern' bought advertising that it didn't really need in many newspapers, and if it saw any unfriendly articles in those papers it

threatened to stop buying ads. The clear-cut forests were disguised by leaving a small number of trees by the sides of the roads, thus hiding the acres of stumps. The mountains of crumpled paper and discarded cardboard were harder to hide, so the 'business concern' bought subcontractor companies to burn the waste or to haul it far from those with the ability to effectively complain.

The Orwellians rarely saw the true surface of anything. Most objects were covered over with colored paper, except for frequently used objects like Boxing Devices. Every ugly object--even very large ones, such as tall buildings--could be covered over with pretty paper and sealed. The pretty paper everywhere meant that Orwellian books went unread, their chores went undone, and they were distracted at their work.

Late one night, 'enemy agents' captured a Boxing Device from a citizen's home. They were puzzled as to its purpose; but once they had set it up in their hideout, they quickly found out what it did. The 'enemy agents' cannot see a way to improve it, so they abandon the machine and go home.

We called him Glassjaw. He was a famous boxer once... famous for his arrogance. Before every match, he'd shake hands with his opponent, and then let him hit him once or twice. He lost every time he entered the boxing ring.

I talked to Glassjaw once, but he was raving. He called himself 'the Videot' and said everyone was just like him--getting hit with high-tech psych tricks every time the 'thing' is on--except he knew he was in a boxing ring.

Mister Rots

Long ago, a man named Mister Rots somehow got more gold than was good for him, and he wanted more. To him, the easiest and fastest way to get more gold was deception, fraud, and outright stealing--also known as banking. To get his five sons into positions of Power, he tried to bribe those already in power. Some of these efforts were successful, and Mr. Rots friends and servants told him (and sold him) state secrets so he could become even richer. His low friends in high places passed laws that made banking very profitable for himself and his sons, but cost many other people much too much. Since educated people didn't need anyone to explain that creating money was an act that belongs to everyone, not just to Mr. Rots and his sons (who would only create money if they were paid 'interest'), he did everything he could to cripple schools and universities. When journalists began to write about these nefarious deeds, Mr. Rots bought the newspapers and magazines to silence the critics. When truth-tellers still found ways to publish the truth, 'accidents' happened. The common people were told lies that too many believed. Mr. Rots and his friends got richer and richer, and the people got poorer and poorer.

Many people think that truth-seeking and truth-telling are worthy human activities and

act as they think. When the truth began to spread about his criminal banks and himself, Mr. Rots' servants did whatever they could to distract and redirect such criticism. His servants learned of high-tech psychology and rhetoric. They learned to call the truth-tellers 'man-haters' rather than let them explain why Mr. Rots was so rich; those truth-tellers who did not know the psych-rhet sometimes answered that they were men themselves, and Mr. Rots' servants could call them self-hating men and further disrupt and disgust those who followed these discussions. Mr. Rots even bought a country which he called a Manly State! Quite a few people learned to blame men for all their troubles, especially when Mr. Rots, his sons, his friends, and his servants worked together to promote such ignorance. In truth, Mr. Rots was merely buying men much like himself, and many such men came from the community that Mr. Rots lived in. Even the tentacles of a vampire \$quid must start short before they can grow long.

Mr. Rots and his five sons are all dead now, but the corp\$€oration they created lives on and grows. Just when it seemed like the whole world would soon belong to the owners of this corp\$€oration, a great many-to-many was created. It grew faster than Mr. Rots usury-based fortune. Most profits-first businesses saw the many-to-many as a possible way to profitability; therefore the many-to-many could not be suppressed even if truth-tellers could also use this device. And the truth spread as the many-to-many grew.

Lies and the liars spoil everything in which they are a part, so those who recognize lies usually stop viewing/reading/listening to whatever media in which the liars are embedded. The great many-to-many offered new media, and a chance to comment and create and share, and it grew as the old media shrank. To counter the rising number of truth-tellers, the whorrible inheritors and servants of the Rot's fortune did what they could to keep the truth from spreading.

The only way for average men to be giants is if everyone else shrinks. The real world is hazardous enough, but some men want more. Some doctors, made ignorant by Mr. Rots' servants and paid-for 'science,' damaged many people with injections and pills and treatments--even their own children. The telly had 'programming' of ignorance (irrelevance, porn, violence, and distractions)--or the broadcasters lost their licenses. Truth-tellers lost their jobs--or the capitalists who employed them would never obtain another bank loan, and perhaps 'accidents' might happen as well. Honest politicians found their opponents had ten times more money to spend on their canned-pains, and if they got elected anyway, they often became ill with mysterious diseases, had strange accidents, or suffered high-velocity lead poisoning. The money trap grew stronger.

But the great many-to-many still grew. No matter how many propaganda websites Mr. Rots' servants created to deceive unwary people, truth-telling websites still received much traffic. No matter how many truth-telling websites were shut down or purchased, somebodies have copied the content and posted it on other websites. Since one crime grows out of another (and Mr. Rots' descendants and their servants commit many), it becomes easier and easier for ordinary people to uncover bits of the greatest deception the world has ever known.

"Contrary to popular belief, voting doesn't happen just once a year during business hours in

November. Voting happens with every action you take and every dollar you spend. Your vote is whatever loot, trade, or sacrifice you make to live comfortably or survive in this society.

The major parties aren't running the country, but the major businesses are. And businesses run on supply and demand, for profit. It might not be the clear-cut answer you're looking for, but until someone with the appropriate means, motive, and opportunity decides to show everyone that no one is above the law, my best suggestion is not to associate with these criminals and their racket." posted by Johann Georg Faust

"Non-violence is essentially non-co-operation. It expresses itself in the refusal to participate in the ordinary processes of society. It may mean the refusal to pay taxes to the government (civil disobedience), or to trade with the social group which is to be coerced (boycott) or to render customary services (strike). While it represents a passive and negative form of resistance, its consequences may be very positive. It certainly places restraints upon the freedom of the objects of its discipline and prevents them from doing what they desire to do." Reinhold Niebuhr, Moral Man & Immoral Society

"The most formidable military machine depends ultimately on the obedience of its soldiers (...) the most powerful corporation becomes helpless when its workers stop working, when its customers refuse to buy its products. The strike, the boycott, the refusal to serve, the ability to paralyze the functioning of a complex social structure - these remain potent weapons against the most fearsome state or corporate power." Howard Zinn

"Our real enemies are not those living in a distant land whose names or policies we don't understand; The real enemy is a system that wages war when it's profitable, the CEOs who lay us off our jobs when it's profitable, the insurance companies who deny us health care when it's profitable, the banks who take away our homes when it's profitable. Our enemies are not several hundred miles away. They are right here in front of us." Mike Prysner

Want to see an end to this awful madness?

Get off the grid. Encourage others to do so as well. Initiate your own black market, tax-free economy in your town. Plan community gardens. Re-learn a skill or two from your rural, pastoral forebears. If you own a small business, declare it a sole proprietorship and then pay off your employees and contractors with cash "under the table." Avoid reporting everything you can. Learn to avoid taxes. Engage in commerce that doesn't involve the exchange of money, but rather goods and services. Stop shopping, except for the basic necessities. Bit by bit, start chipping away at their tax revenues. It won't be easy. This system is deeply entrenched, but sacrifices will have to come before any one of us is able to experience true liberty, not the pathetic McFreedom they try to shove at us. Hit them in the wallet, where it'll hurt them most, the only place we have the power to truly hurt them.

This is the only sure way. The State loves violent confrontation, because they excel at it. They have the guns and the weapons. Be assured, any attempts to face the State on these terms, those preferred by the State itself, will fail. They'll use all the weapons your tax-monies bought and the jack-booted thugs you paid them to train to "protect" you.

Cut them off from the source. Avoid every tax you possibly can. All of us, or even a majority of us, acting this way en masse will be enough to hit their wallets harder than a haymaker.

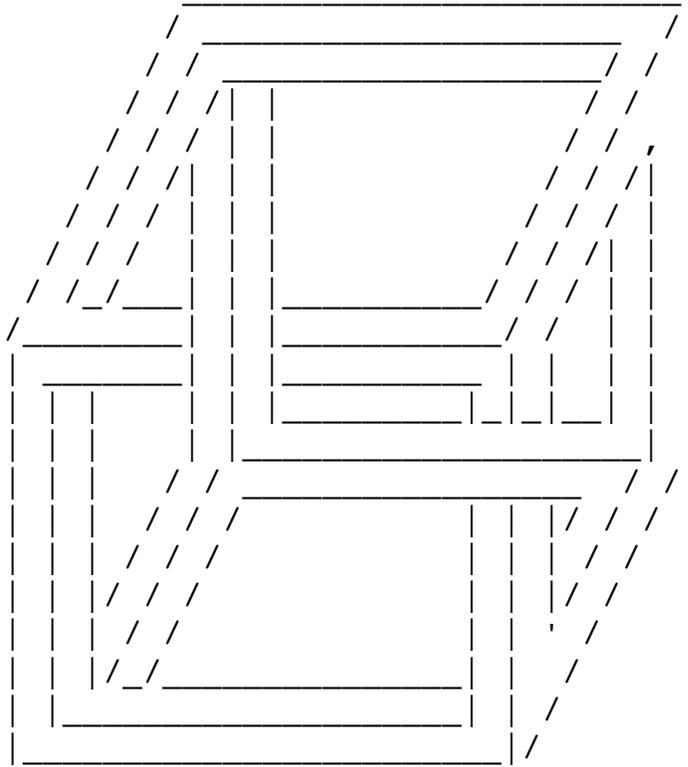
This CAN be done. This MUST be done.

Please do it for your children, and for their children after them. This ruthless, soulless

government-run crimewave cannot continue if we are to survive. Either we stand together or we fall separately.

Remember Ben Franklin's old political cartoon of the snake separated into thirteen pieces, representing the thirteen North American colonies: "JOIN OR DIE."

Truer words than ever." Joe Shelton



This 'work' (version 1.00 of More Short Stories--Parably Allegories!) from no6ody.wordpress.com belongs to me, you, and everyone forever. You may use this 'work' (or portions thereof) for any **non-commercial** use.

Creative Commons 4.0