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Is Suicide the Answer to Life?

by Nate A. Lindell

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An ironic question, you'd think; yet it was recently asked of me by a Crisis Intervention Worker (C.I.W.) here at my stupormax. She — surnamed after a river in Ireland, so we'll call her... Mickey — asked it after I threw a couple of Chesire comments + caterpillar questions at her while I sat in Alpha Unit's* strip cage, waiting to go to my new box after receiving a year in seg for persuading a pastoral visitor to help me subvert the evil empire I'm under by mailing poems for me + requesting prison records that'd reveal crimes + conspiracies of my captors... my usual supercriminal antics.

I have sinned + God will kill me... unless you send me ten million dollars. Hmm, fifty bucks'll do too!

This C.I.W. has known me since when I first arrived in this dive. Then my bald spot was still small + my hair was still brown.

Oh for days of yore

When my hair was brown + more!

Her hair was still blonde + cut short — now it's white + long. I think she had a crush on me, as any sensible feline should! I knew she looked up to me, because I'm 6'3" + she's kinda stubby (Ireland is the land of the Little People). At least we got on well, probably in part because I never cussed her out or masturbated in front of her, unlike too many other captives here.

The last time I was on Alpha Unit (for a total frame up), I asked Mickey for some words of encouragement. She peered in at the books in my cell, then said, "You probably know more than I do!"

"Yeah, but sometimes I need to hear nice lies from someone else."

"Well... at least you don't have face cancer!"

I laughed like a jack-ass.

She'd probably just been threatened, masturbated at, + called everything but her name. So I didn't take offense at her morbid encouragement. Besides, she was right; coming from her puny, stressed self, it was

* Alpha Unit is used to house incoming prisoners and those with a fresh disciplinary term, along with suicidal inmates.

hilarious.

All's well — I didn't have face cancer.

This time she seemed less stressed & more hospitable, which I suspected was due to my recent suggestion that she not grip the mask too tightly that she & all of us here are being compelled to wear as we act out others' satire of "justice."

She came over to the cage I was in when I called for her.

"What are you doing back here?" she asked in a lamenting tone.

"My free will was overwhelmed by that of those in power."

The specifics of the conversation I led her into have dissipated, but resulted in her asking, "So, is suicide the answer to life?"

"No!" I said, scoffing.

Two guards came, cuffed & shackled me, bringing me to my new box.

"The answer to life is well stated by Edgar Allan Poe," I said, while the guards finished shackling me. As they escorted me past Mickey's box (an office that's smaller than my cell) where a tall, grinning maintenance worker stood by the door, I recited with exuberance,

"'Ride, boldly ride,'

The shade replied

'If you seek for Eldorado.'"

When you understand what Eldorado was & after you read the rest of Poe's poem by that title, you'll understand the meaning of life.

For now, I'm getting back in the saddle & ridin'. Feel free to come with me!

Writing Materials