

A Lonely Man

Written by Janko Petrek

Tuesday, 17 November 2009 17:40 - Last Updated Saturday, 20 August 2011 18:44



>From: "Me" < jerry@bestofliterature.com >

>To: editor < editor@bestofliterature.com >

>Subject: For Rastislav

>Date: 20 December, 2001 05:50 PM

Dear Rastislav:

I'm up the shit creek! Johnny has betrayed the ideals of not writing and started doing so. Oh, gee, it's rolling – rolling – from heaven down to earth!

Jerry the Non-writing

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>From: Johnny < johnny@bestofliterature.com >

>To: "Me" < jerry@bestofliterature.com >

>Subject: Radiator

>Date: 21 December, 2001 06:51 AM

Jerry:

I still have a story to tell you about a radiator, which may signal something important. Our kitchen radiator started leaking. An acquaintance of mine gave me some special welding sealer, but that means the radiator has to be bled and that in turn means asking a person, who lives in our building, to turn off the main water flow. This is practically an impossible task for me and that's why I have decided to wait for the end of the heating period when I would be able to bleed the radiator by myself. Fortunately I won't have to meet the fore mentioned person, and thus the number of my contacts with other human beings will not increase for now.

In the meantime, I have a container under the radiator, which I regularly empty. But how surprised I was when I found out that during the month the water has been dripping less and less until it stopped dripping completely.

Now the radiator is no longer leaking. I have consulted with experts on this, and each one confirmed that something like this is not possible. I, too, think that something like this, according to common laws of physics is impossible. When the structural wholesomeness of a material gets disrupted, it is impossible for this wholesomeness to repair itself on its own. It is the same thing as a hole in a sock stitching itself up, or a punctured tire repairing itself. Therefore,

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a perforated radiator cannot seal itself, because a non-permeable crystal grid would have to be created between a sedimentary deposit within the radiator and radiator itself, which is impossible to happen on its own. And since melted iron is not flowing through the radiator, but only water, the only explanation of this phenomenon is offered by quantum physics. As you certainly know, one of the principles of quantum physics is that it includes nuclear activities as reversing their direction in time continuum. This property of elementary particles has even been proven. Based on this paradigm, scientists theoretically admit that something like travelling in time is essentially possible. It simply seems that our radiator in the kitchen is going back in time. Equations of quantum physics could elegantly illustrate this phenomenon.

I'm thinking about writing to S. W. Hawking about this, but I'm afraid that when he flies over here with a team of physicists, the radiator will start travelling in the direction of conventional time progression. So I'll rather keep the whole story to myself. I'm making entries into my diary every day, where I'm carefully writing details about the incident for future generations. I'm very curious about the time co-ordinates which the radiator will eventually get into. Maybe one day I'll come home and the radiator will not be there anymore, but an old one instead, the one we had before. I'm writing you this, because you understand these things and won't think of me as a nut.

Take care. Johnny.

>From: "Me" < jerry@bestofliterature.com >

>To: Johnny < johnny@bestofliterature.com >

>Subject: RE: Radiator

>Date: 23 December, 2001 10:16 AM>

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Johnny:

I've got a favor to ask of you. If I ever come back home to Slovakia and you've still got that radiator, could I have a talk with it alone?

Jerry the Big Ear

>From: Johnny < johnny@bestofliterature.com >

>To: "Me" < jerry@bestofliterature.com >

>Subject: New Year's Eve

>Date: 31 December, 2001 09:51 AM>

Hi Jerry:

Thanks for the mental striptease you've sent us for Christmas in a form of a postcard. We

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understand it from your end as an unusual act of sentimentality a man has when in a non-standard state of mind. We always used to be proud, at least me for sure, of unscrupulously defying all moral rules, even though deep inside we're sensitive like sunburn. When we were sitting in a tavern after my mother's funeral, I felt absolutely nothing, no grief. My mind works very slowly, so I grasped what had happened only one week after the funeral. Then I went down like a balloon full of holes. In such a mental state, definitely even I would have been able to send someone warm greetings toward some occasion like you did.

My visit to Nova Dubnica by train is already behind me. I managed to survive it. You wrote me that it's very cold where you are in the US. Here in Slovakia it's very cold too. If you remember the Sturec Hotel under Donovaly, yesterday it got buried under an avalanche that broke through a part of a wall and covered the hotel guests in their rooms.

Today it's the New Year's Eve or something, so I'm expecting to be bored tonight. I can't drink, because my liver stopped processing alcohol. When I get smashed, I have to wait for a week until the alcohol evaporates through my skin, and that I don't want.

That radiator is still travelling back in time. The hole has completely vanished. If it is travelling at a standard speed as it was before into the future, then sometime in 8 years it will disappear from our kitchen and the old one will come back, which used to leak too and I'll have to seal it in the end no matter what.

Of course, we'll give you a chance to talk to it in privacy.

Take care.

Johnny

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>From: editor < editor@bestofliterature.com >

>To: "Me" < jerry@bestofliterature.com >

>Subject: For Jerry

>Date: 1 January, 2002 2:57 PM>

Jerry:

your postcard has arrived – THX. where do we stand with the stories, or are you going to leave it off for NY?

are you going there to see a bunch of writers? such a brilliantly commercialized one that it finds its way only according to non-existent signs for the blind which are on a special type of a dollarized paper. even we won't come up with something better due to the shortness of time we've got left here on Earth. according to Johnny, events started going in reverse, and he's witnessing it on his radiator. it's spreading like a plague. I've replaced my heating equipment, and I feel that I'm going in reverse too. that's why I suggest you sit down on your ass over there somewhere and do something with those stories. send them to me so that our book moves ahead.

when you write nicely, surely some babe, who can read nicely, will get stuck on you.

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Jerry, I wish you all the best in the New Year! do something, for heaven's sake, while we're still alive!

R.

>From: "Me" < jerry@bestofliterature.com >

>To: editor < editor@bestofliterature.com >

>Subject: For Rastislav

>Date: 1 January, 2002 4:53 PM>

Rastislav:

Happy New Year!

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I keep on writing, but it's hard; everyday I'm struggling for a dressed up existence. I can't say that it's for a bare existence, but a dressed up one for sure.

Jerry the Jerryrious

In the attachment I'm sending you something from Johnny.

J.

>Attachment

A LONELY MAN

by Jan (Johnny) Petrek

In a certain town, there used to live a lonely man. No one has ever seen him in the company of

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people. Although moments have passed when he could be seen talking with another person, yet these instances were rare.

One beautiful day though, an extraordinary event took place. On that day, as he was sitting alone in a cafe, a pretty and ambitious young lady, who was also lonely, wanted to join him. She thought that since they were both lonely, it would feel nice being together. She wanted to help him in his loneliness, and naturally, she wanted to get rid of her own loneliness as well.

And more...

Seeing that the man was very attractive, she secretly hoped that even a deeper relationship would develop between them.

“Good morning,” she spoke to the man and asked: “Do you have a free seat here? May I join you?”

The man jerked and looked at her in surprise.

“No, unfortunately it is taken,” he said quietly after getting over his surprise.

The woman would not let herself be brushed off and asked:

“Are you waiting for someone? While you’re waiting, you wouldn’t mind if I sat by you, would you?”

“Oh, no, not at all. Please, have a seat,” said the man giving up.

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The young woman thought she has won half the game and gladly sat down.

The lonely man, however, was silent.

“You seem to be such a lonely man,” she tried to stir up a conversation expecting that the man would eventually start talking about the problems that had led him into loneliness.

She figured he would start talking, then she would join in and a feeling of fellowship would arise between them, which is how they would get closer.

“Yes, I am a lonely man,” he admitted.

The woman was pleased. She managed the start well.

“Don’t worry,” she responded. “I’m lonely too, and if you like we can help each other with our problems ... we can confide to each other.”

The man turned dumbfounded and twitched as if stung.

“But I have no problems,” he said in shock. “What made you think I have any problems that I should confide to someone?” And he shook his head in uproar.

“But you yourself have told me that you are lonely,” said the young woman starting to lose her ground, but she would not give up. “And after all, a lonely man does need company,” she objected.

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“But this is a misunderstanding,” protested the man.

“This is a big misunderstanding,” he kept repeating while continuously shaking his head.

“I’m confident that in order to be lonely, I don’t need any company.”