

# The Visionary

I stood waiting by the revolving doors of the MetLife building at eleven minutes to ten. I was waiting for Neil. It was January, just after the break of a new year. Neil arrived on time, but the world spun through seven billion lifetimes in those eleven minutes.

## LIGHT

The morning light grazed the relief on the archway directly across from 200 Park Avenue, brilliant bright and intense, illuminating it in one breathless stroke of light breaking up in slats streaming soaking into the stonework flowing over gushing in peppering it with photons pulsing photogenic and I was the only one to see its grace over the heads of the multitudes milling about the street below the multitudes a few breaths beneath its benevolent gaze the multitudes of incalculable individuals men women professionals and amateurs employees and managers executives and interns lawyers and accountants bankers and brokers janitors and CEOs living droplets in a rushing chaotic organic river of humanity that had no end and no beginning spilling over the sidewalks the streets the walkways and tunnels and bridges paths causeways and freeways of New York connecting to the freeways causeways paths and bridges tunnels and walkways the streets and the sidewalks of Los Angeles Chicago DC Houston Dallas Philly Boston San Francisco Atlanta Miami New Orleans and Seattle innumerable streams and tributaries swelling into rivers of hardworking people business people serious professional people brilliant strategic people rivers that always dried up in Las Vegas and so it was that this current this ample tributary of the mighty economic ocean gushed immediately in front of me and directly below the illuminated relief at 200 Park Avenue lighting up the entire street this single ray of light without reflecting without bending or glancing off windows its light blessing everyone in its sight a magnificent veil of sparkling pepper particles descending cascading falling forever from heaven onto the street but no one noticed no one saw no one had the presence of soul to look up and see the light from heaven draping them in all its benevolence they felt nothing of its touch and nothing of its caress and so they rushed on unaware of the blessing that rained gold upon their heads unaware of an unassuming beauty born of a simple law of physics unaware of the purity that graced everything around them unaware of the thing that had given their mothers life built all of human history evolved everything on their dinner plates crushed ancient animals into the liquid powering their cars cell phones and industries and made their luxurious lives at all possible but I did, I saw the dappling of the beam of light bathing everyone rushing by in front of me trying to enlighten these multitudes of professional lives unfolding in front of me caressing every face that passed by, hoping for even a nanosecond of recognition of peace of inner bliss, but no these weren't human beings they were briefcases cell phones blackberries bluetooth devices tablets cloud servers mini suitcases on wheels

expensive suits and polished shoes on the move wearable tech of every persuasion entire careers rushing by dressed to the hilt and trained to succeed groomed to take over the New York Stock Exchange and maybe NASDAQ too and after that Tokyo London Shanghai Sydney Mumbai Moscow Johannesburg Istanbul Muscat didn't they realize all of the market valuation of all the world's stock exchanges were but a blip in the benevolent face of the sun in the power of its light that most human minds could barely comprehend and I thought of Neil, the other and more famous Neil, the one who had made one of those 163.5 billion footsteps on the moon in the name of all humanity, who had seen the breathtaking beauty of a blue planet hurtling through dark velvet space and wondered with tears in his throat why we lack so much peace and fight so hard

And they all rushed through the revolving doors where I stood waiting for Neil

So many lives so many minds so much ambition desire and ego passing through those doors those burnished copper frames and thick plates of glass smeared with as many fingerprints as there are footsteps to the sun so many impeccably pressed light blue and white shirts navy skirts pants suits Italian silk ties and satin hems expertly sewn shimmering cuff links extracted from rare metals and designer everything, so many schedules meetings and deadlines rushing out through the archway of East 45<sup>th</sup> across the street and around me and into the revolving doors of 200 Park Avenue, a river in flood parting all around me in honor of the ancient unspoken code of personal space jealously guarded by animal instincts encrusted in an animal brain refusing to give in to the elegant overtures of a frustrated pre-frontal cortex and the illuminations of an accepting and tranquil higher consciousness, a procession of self-proclaimed civilized professionals enslaved by the ticking of a linear Gregorian clock that beat the same drum as their pseudo-unipolar neurons, some looking at me but not the light some looking at their watches but not the light some looking at their smartphones briefcases shirt lapels sleeves but not the light other people's briefcases shirt lapels sleeves and the hems of trenchcoats the curves of high heels cutting up the sidewalk but not the light the swooning sway of a well-cut dress but not the light never the light not one of them ever saw the light because it bore no importance in their world it had no place in their world this world they had been building for all those years ever since they left business school and that was the year a thundercloud passed over their vision their psyche their heart their soul and like the polluted jet stream spun in place ever since, raining all over their young childhood mind that lay dying in the muddy river of the new idols of degraded social values that now poured the foundations of the structures of success, the idols of positioning and politics, of spin and self-interest, of delay denial and defense, of undermining and fragmenting breaking tearing apart the cohesion of well being well meaning and living well and with meaning

And they all pressed on through the revolving doors that had learned not to resist

*(END first two pages)*

## TIME

Six hundred seventy-one seconds to eleven o'clock in the morning while the revolving doors spun an endless spray of the highly civilized stress of New York, 2,890,835.2 footsteps away in Mexico's ancient Yucatán peninsula in a hidden corner of a lagoon near La Bahía de Ascensión, a tiny baby pufferfish was intently examining the stem of a young mangrove tree, wondering how far up into heaven it went and how far down into the sea bed and why it cast shadows into the water the way it did and which way was best to follow it when she grew up to be a really big pufferfish. Here the same light that caressed a cold stone archway in the cold stone heart of a big city kissed millions of breaths of life into a lagoon no executive in the world ever saw. Here the same time that spun circles around the heads of frenetic schedules in the world's financial capitals gently outlined delicate nested pools on the water's surface around the stems of the young mangrove trees, taking great care to make each ringlet an absolutely perfect circle.

Brushing past the baby puffer fish, a small crab tiptoed across the muddy bottom, slowly and discreetly, negotiating loose bits of organic matter hovering just above the rich silt and tiny snails that angrily pushed away from his claws as he pittered by. Shallow waves, the last memories of mighty currents pushing in from the Gulf of Mexico, washed over him onto a sliver of a beach made entirely of tiny white shells that had collected over countless journeys of the sun against the stems of the mangroves at the lagoon's edge.

And there a little distance away from the little beach, a fisherman silently cast his fly, the elegant liquid dance of a single line unbroken light translucent and clear, coaxing it to blend as one with the languid lines of water currents below and the lucid lines of breezes just above and mesmerize the wariest of fish yet keep itself visible against the blue of the sky visible and present and always at the beck and call of its master expressing his will his intent his love for the fish he spoke to these wondrous beings he connected with, an extension of his arm his body and mind, a dance liquid and sharp at the same time, light and smooth yet firm and strong, bending flowing snapping back and forth without regard to time, forward to greet the sharp horizon swimming in blues and greens, backward to kiss the air just above the water's surface, forward again to reach out still further, back again to dare a little closer, smoother, lighter, lengthening, reaching, stretching out each move it made until it rivaled the horizon itself and then one more unhurried snap forward to the horizon as it lay sweetly down onto the water's surface, breathless

and breaking just enough to enter and sink down to the rich muddy bottom where the bonefish rested, living their time in ways the well-trained professional predators of New York could never understand

Yet he was one among them who did. The fisherman was a senior financial analyst who spent his linear time with the alpha patriarch of management consulting firms in New York City, one of those with millions of miles of fiber optic line linking their clients and suppliers and thousands of employees buzzing in hundreds of offices all around the planet and a name that every other firm instantly recognized as a dominant species in the global corporate ecosystem. But to him it meant nothing these names these brands these logos and the looks of quietly suppressed envy whenever he pronounced the name of his firm; he could not grasp the reason why the name of a non living entity operating in an artificial environment on a mechanized calendar inspired so much more admiration than the names of living breathing megacomplex ecosystems that had existed and evolved for millions of years before things called companies ever saw the light of modern day, names of places he knew far away in a slower and more sacred time, names that all belonged to a world ignored by those very busy people running flying rushing all across its surface every hour of every day. He had always stood by his natural human right to follow a balanced working schedule and come home in time to spend a few relaxed hours in the sweet company of his wife; he had stood by his right not to think about work on the week-ends and he had stood by his right to flee the fragmented chaos of New York with his beloved to this unknown and undiscovered sliver of bliss in the Yucatán where he felt whole and complete, where he felt free and unfettered the way a man should live. And as his wife watched him from the little half moon of a beach, her fingers skimming across millions of tiny white shells exploring their endless ever-shifting patterns, he felt there was nothing missing in his life at all.

(...)

It was an afternoon like so many others and yet completely unique he was a man like so many others and yet completely unique she was a woman like so many others and yet completely unique

2643.37 kilometers away the revolving doors lost the sound of their reason for being

So there it was directly in front of me stark as the morning light the conflict the problem the extraordinary crisis in human society: time. That quintessential element that quizzical controversial inexplicable force this essence that permeates everything in all of existence and pours through the veins of physical laws of mathematical equations of the tendrils of newborn stars of the structure of music of the web of original thought of life itself this non linear dance of dimensions this cosmic spin-cycle of every particle in all known and imagined universes the yang of space-time the seed of entropy the thorn in Einstein's brain this concept of the mega the mini the max the mean and the average the nano the quantum the probable

the impossible and unknown the infinite eternal and omniscient this concept of everything something and nothing at all, all at once always sometimes and never again, this force that rattles the very core of civilization shapes the prowess of nature and dictates the path of evolution for all things living and non living the path of decay running down the alpha beta gamma tracks of stochastic probabilities and time-constants of mean-lives half-lives and lives unrealized the path of creation growth change realization completion disintegration destruction and rebirth this thing that is the foundation of everything we are do and feel this pen that writes all of our words and decides what we remember and what we forget this tool we use to slice our lives into concise packets of experience judgment intention imagination and memory solar lunar fiscal astrological agricultural personal and professional this canvas we paint a thousand different names mayan gregorian islamic hindu hebrew chinese this commodity no one can get enough of this product no one can sell package or market this force no one can stop fast forward rewind not even pause this journey we all think we are traveling along when we already have

(...)

What would do you with the volume of time that flows through eternity can you fax it can you email it can you run after a FedEx truck holding it all wrapped up in your arms

How do you price time this force this element this law this reality we live with twenty-four seven three sixty-five how do you evaluate its worth measure its weight determine its value when the universe charges you nothing for its use how do you gauge its meaning when it means so many different things to so many people when you can't logically argue for or against it when it no longer exists for those long gone and those who've yet to arrive how do you validate its existence when it escapes moral physical and fiscal boundaries and spins tiny storms in theorists' heads when you can't catch in your butterfly net when you can't touch it feel it see or smell it digest it trip over it in your rat racing shoes how do you carve it into slices you can sprinkle with sugar and pass around the room when everyone's already had too much how can you roll it up and lay it down in vast superhighways of productivity that have no speed limit but lots of cops how do you withhold it to serve your purpose when no one ever has enough how do you take it away from others so you can have more how do you package it into boxes you can ship around the world on planes trains and cargo ships when it takes up no space how do you stop it and make it come back so you can restart relationships reinvest in the right stocks redeem your guilt and right your mistakes how do you clone it so you can have forty-eight hours in a day how do you reconcile it with relativity and quantum mechanics when they both need unique expressions of itself how do you accept it as an objective absolute when your awareness has caused its forward flow and its backward thinking how do you steal it with no one looking how can you kill it if you like birds how do you become its master owner and commander when it governs your very existence how do you tame it when it has no reins you can grasp

what formula can you draft that equates true time with the things you produce and the services you offer  
what exchange rate can lock it in its online history what algorithm can render it into binary code you can  
fuse onto a silicon chip

When we put a price on time we sell our soul

(END ALL EXCERPTS)