An Untitled Story (sort of) In the Vonnegutian Style

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An Untitled Story (sort of) In the Vonnegutian Style

I

Tina Truelove had just gotten her flue shot. A nurse with a white hat had placed an inject gun against her arm and it made a sound like Tina's brother's paper airplane. The sound was wosh.
Wosh!

Tina imagined that right at this very second tiny flu viruses inside her were clutching and moaning in their death throes like Billy the Kid.

Billy the Kid was a hero of Tina's brother Terry. Billy had been a professional, freelance bank robber until an old friend had shot him in the back. Then Billy had become a professional, dead, folk anti-hero.

Billy had worn a black hat in the movies because he was a bad guy. People in government positions often wore black hats too. People could tell them from the bad guys because they wore ties.

Tina wondered if her flu viruses wore black hats. Maybe the vaccination molecules wore microscopic ties.

Tina's husband wore ties. He was a high school career counselor.

High school is the place that Earth people send their children when they reach the intermediate developmental phase. In high school old people try to teach young people how to be old people. They do not teach them how to get high. Getting high is known as extra-curricular activity.

High.
Activity.

In the sixties there were a lot of young people who did not get a chance to use what they had learned. They were snapped up by an institution of higher learning. This institution is called the U.S. Army.

Army.

Most of the young people did not become folk heroes, pro or anti. They only became dead.

Dead.
Tina guessed that her husband had counseled a few young people to death.

II

I was going to say that Kilgore Trout and Eliot Rosewater had come to me in a dream and forced me to write this by using extreme psychological torture. If this is true, I don't remember it.

I am writing this because my dog ate my research paper.

A research paper is something that college professors make students write for grades. The papers are filled with specific statements copied from papers other people who are not college students have written. This pleases many professors because they know that college students can not think. Some can not even copy.

Some professors believe that students are really Sony tape recorders that have had their eyes unslanted and their on/off buttons hidden by plastic surgery.

Sometimes professors and students surprise each other by thinking.

Surprise.

III

Tina picked up her husband at school on the way home from the clinic where her flu had been shot. Tina wasn't feeling well. She was, in medical terminology, nauseated. Her toes felt a little stiff too, like they were asleep. She thought it was because she had gotten her leather sandales wet at the beach yesterday and they had dried hard. She did not know that it was caused by chemicals.

Chemicals.

Mr. Truelove, of course, was very happy to see Tina drive up in her pink Willy's Jeep. Some of the fellows he worked with thought Tina was a bit eccentric. Some thought she was crazy. They all wore ties too.
The Principal wore a black hat.

Mr. Truelove asked Tina how her day had been and told her about the upcoming donkey basketball game between the State Association of High School Counselors and Donkey Growers of America. Ticket sale proceeds were to be donated to underprivileged igloo architects in South America.

America.

Today while Tina's viruses had been murdered by good guy chemicals, the SAHSC had held a meeting at a lounge called The Pirate's Den. They had elected Mr. Truelove to the office of President.

President.

There were other bars in town but the men who drank at them all worked at the munitions plant. They did not wear hats or ties. They were nothing.

Nothing.

Terry worked in the chemical department of the munitions plant. He researched new chemicals to put in bombs so that maximum kill strength could be fit into smaller and smaller bombs.

Bombs.

IV

Kilgore Trout had written a science fiction story about a new secret weapon. It was a bomb that burst on impact and released tremendous amounts of Nothing all over everything. In the story, Nothing was a new chemical discovered by a child who attended Montessori School in the Yukon Territory.

It was not a very long story. You might say it was nothing at all.

V

When Tina Truelove began to choke and gasp, her husband thought it was because she was overjoyed at his new position. He grabbed the steering wheel of the pink jeep and guided it into the parking lot of a nearby bar so that Tina could control her happiness before she
hit a tree and killed his chances for greatness.

Greatness.

Terry was in the parking lot because he had been drinking at the bar. It was a place where men who are nothing go to meet other blue collar nothings in hopes of meeting someone with connections to somethings. Terry was almost a something but he was humble about it.

Mr. Truelove knew that the good news had been too much of a shock for Tina. She was having convulsions.

Convulsions.

Truelove dragged her out of the pink jeep and waved Terry over. He thought that they might be able to calm her together. Terry had one of his famous paper airplanes with him.

VI

One of the nothings in the bar where Mr. Truelove had parked worked at the munitions plant too. He was tired of being a nothing. Last week Tuesday at 4:30 he had become so tired of being a nothing that he had stolen some chemicals from Terry's lab.

Lab.

A long time ago, when a man said, "I've got a Lab." to his neighbor he meant that he had a big black dog that liked to swim around looking for dead ducks.

Dead ducks.

The boy had taken the chemicals home and hidden them in an old black bag of his father's. His father had been a pilot in the war but now he was a doctor. He worked with a nurse who wore white hats and thought she was killing bad guys.

Bad guys.

The doctor took the old bag with him the next day because the clasp was broken on his good one. He had taken the chemicals out of the good bag and put them into the bad bag. When he got to the clinic where he worked with the nurse, he gave her the chemicals and told her, "Kill 'em dead!" and chuckled. Kill 'em dead was a little medical joke.
The nurse put the chemicals into the inject gun and began to give all the earthlings in the line an injection. Earthlings often found themselves standing in lines. Tina was standing in line. Tina had stepped up to the nurse and the gun had gone wosh. Wosh.

VII

Tina had been propped against the wheel of the jeep and was now clutching and moaning in her death throes. Mr. Truelove and Terry did not know it but they would die soon after Tina did because that's the way I decided to write this story.

They did not know that I had let some chemicals get on Terry's airplane. Most of them had been attracted to the other chemicals that Terry had painted on his plane in the form of a flag.

Flag.

Tina did not know that I was going to write this story about her. If she had known she would have gotten someone who knew how to type better and where to put the commas to write it. Tina didn't know that she was dead either.

Surprise.

/ Diane Hosteter /