

SOME EXTRA YEARS?

By

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Okay, you did good. From absolutely nothing to... a big bang. So, I think.

Of all of the trillions of stars and “stuff” that have been floating around for billions of years, there is only one planet that, so far as we know, contained the right elements, which, when mixed together over a long period of time, created the kind of living organisms which evolved into human beings, who then propagated for millions of years.

Now, of the 5 billion people on earth, two people happened, through a series of circumstances and happenstances, to meet at a certain time, and through more circumstances and happenstances, happened to get together and happened to fornicate at a certain time, and during that time, of the billions of sperm and eggs bustling around, only one sperm and one egg got together, and through it all, through all of those odds, I was made. Born.

Thank you. Great. How lucky we are to be here.

But I just don't quite get it. If all goes well for us in eighty, ninety or a hundred years, you take it away. You have infinity. Couldn't you have thrown in an extra 5000, 500 or 50 years? What's an 50 extra years from infinity? Okay, maybe you gave the soul an eternal life span, so I guess at some point, it has to leave the physical body? So couldn't you have doled out just a little more time to the body? Automobiles last longer. You have infinity. That's just a wee bit chintzy. You wouldn't make a great date. Well, I wouldn't date you, because I'm assuming that you're a male. Maybe you're not. Whatever. Look, I hate to burst your bubble, but people don't want to leave here. As rough as it gets here, they just don't want to go to wherever, even if it's all happy and sweet. I don't know anyone who's ready. Because it's always too soon. So, what's the extra years to you?

Look, you may not have put a lot of thought behind this now-you-see-me, -now-you-don't routine that you've given us. Maybe, because giving us the extra years may not be as high a priority on your list as say perhaps... tragedies to people, or groups of people? You don't have any favorite types, do you? Just kidding. Wait, when all fifty contestants in the Miss America Beauty Pageant, pray to you to win, and then the winner says that God helped her, could it be true? You wouldn't give a boxer a victory for jack-hammering another man's head to smithereens, just because he asked you for it? Okay, maybe they don't know what they're really saying. The boxer is just happy that he's not flat on his back looking up at the microphone, saying “He's a

great fighter.” - Anyone would look great from that vantage point, and the new Miss America is just overwhelmed with thoughts of her potential acting career.

Or maybe you don't have an affect on what happens here or what we do to each other, and only set up the ground rules. We get 80 some odd years, then we die. So we prioritize. 12-18 years of school, work, marriage, kids, have a patronizing retirement, then death. If we knew we had 80 million years, well, maybe we wouldn't go to school for a million years.

Are you open to suggestions? I think I expected a deep voice to answer me. I certainly wouldn't believe that it was You answering if it were a high pitched voice, or a whining voice, or an angry voice. I definitely don't think You should be angry. I mean I wouldn't be angry if someone didn't praise me 20 times a day. If I loved that person, they wouldn't have to praise me at all. Well, flattery does have an affect on me. But, You must be bigger than that. You better be. I could go for a motherly voice. Yes, one that is nurturing, reassuring, sort of... seductive. Oh, no! I don't even want to go there! Me and You? Cows are jumping over a fence. Man on first, runs to second... Whew!

Okay here's the suggestion: Make everyone die at 65 years old. Just hear me out. I know that's young, but, in exchange, You take away ALL pain, disease and suffering. No pain. And, here's the great part, since we would know that we are all going at 65, there will be no surprise to us, to our family or friends. No feeling that anything else could have been done, or that the person was... cheated... before their time, no matter how much they cherished life. You see, it's all relative, anyway. Why 65? I don't know, it's a pact, so you get to have some years back. Hey, we wouldn't need social security. Why would you care anyway? You have infinity. That's if you believe in God. Ha, ha. My little stab at humor. Of course, you'd have to address the suicide issue, maybe make it impossible or something. Hmm, that would probably piss off those who think they are going to meet 60 virgins if they do themselves in. Why on earth would someone want 60 virgins? Now 60 hookers.... THAT might be worth it. I might go for that. You don't think that's funny. Okay.

Well, you know, the bible was one long, long book and I don't think it had any funny lines in it anywhere. **How did you choose your writer or writers? DID YOU DICTATE?** I think you spent too much time, on “begatting.” So and so begat him and so and so begat her and “he lived to be 800 years.” Hey, You were doling out more years in those days!! Hmm. You know, there was potential for some humor. Did you ever watch that old Moses movie, the Ten Commandments? Moses comes to town and turns a stick into a snake, and someone says “Oh, it's just a trick.” Later, he turns a huge fountain of water into blood (or was it wine?), and someone says “Oh, it's just a trick.” Some trick, but fine. But then later, he PARTS the Red Sea. Then an actor, I think it was Edward G. Robinson, says “Don't follow him, it's just a trick.”

What trick? He just parted the whole fucking sea! At this point, I'd be kissing Moses' feet, I'm converted!

You just needed to lighten it up a bit. You gave us a sense of humor, the gift of laughter. We're easy. We want to laugh. What other species would laugh at why a chicken wants to get to the other side?

Listen to this. I did this silly routine on different subjects, imitating the “know-it-all.” Like, on one, I spoke calmly, but authoritatively, about how the term “method” acting came about and I just made up the silliest things, like “A long time ago, in Russia, an actor was backstage, waiting to go on, and someone yelled “hey meat-head” and the actor went on stage and somehow he was terrific that night. Hence the term “meat... head” “method” came about. She laughed out loud while I continued on very seriously, and she said that I should do it for others. I knew it wasn't going to be funny to anyone else, but to her, but hearing her laugh of course encouraged me to continue. And we'd sort of peter out... late at night. A sense of humor...

I'm sorry. That's why I came up with the 65 year plan. You see, although she was up in years, she cherished life so much that I feel she was taken before her time, like as though she was just a kid. That she was cheated. Hey, I'm sure you've seen me with girls much younger than me. I actually didn't know how old she was when I first met her. I was 22, and I thought she was only... well I only knew that she was older, but she was timeless. If we're talking just physical, she was more beautiful and sexier than girls in their twenties. Even in her comatose state, she was truly beautiful. That's just talking physical. Superficial to you. Right? You know, I couldn't care less if she developed a few wrinkles. It's funny, because of our age difference, she said that she would die before me. And I argued that, but then once I said “Well, when you were younger and I wasn't born yet, you were “alive” and I wasn't here. I was “dead.”

She also used to say I could “pull a rabbit out of a hat.” Maybe I did pull her out of a few jams, but, this one time, I couldn't. So, I wish I could have at least held her hand and walked her through that passage, from here to wherever, so she just wouldn't have worried. That moment one goes to the moment one realizes all is well, if there is one, must be awful, however short it is. Boy they must be happy when they see you. I could just see them going “Whew.” Do they ever say... “So, why did you throw us all into such a mix on earth, for such a short time? What the fuck?”

You know what I'm getting? That maybe one can enjoy our short visit here if we tap dance around getting caught up in all of this. Maybe if we avoid loving. Maybe that's the secret to life. To “like” but don't “love.” No pain. Play it safe.

There's life and energy going on in the wee hours of an all night deli. Those wee hours. I looked for her everywhere. I looked for her in every female. A little part of her could always be found. An inflection in a voice, a hair style, a certain walk, Something... but nothing. There is no house where she resides.

To play it safe. Yeah, that would be great. Because the trade-off is if you love, there will be a lot of pain when someone goes. That's it. To protect ourselves, we don't love too much. I wouldn't miss a thing. Yes!

Then I suppose, I wouldn't be able to miss her wit. Her willingness to fly. Her freedom. Her lack of self consciousness. Her hats, her heels... her style. Her vitality, her inquisitiveness, courage, true grit, risk taking, guts. Her delicious mischievousness. Her femininity. Seeing her cherish something she got from the supermarket. A new type of ice cream or maybe an old flavor that she loved. Her laughing at something on TV in the wee hours of the morning. Her fun. Her joy at being creative. Discovering new things as she taught. Her knowing "what's important." Our kidding around. A best friend, a girl, a mother, a sister. The intimacy of her. To make love to her, wake up with her, laugh with her, sing with her, cry with her, comfort her, be taken care of by her, be yelled at by her, yell at her, get angry at her, pursue and be pursued by her, be chased in a car by her, being hidden in the back of her car by her. To steal with her. To live by no one else's rules with her. To be frustrated with her, dance with her, hang in the kitchen with her, have delicious food brought back from parties and dinner dates by her, eat with her. Watching her spray herself with strong perfume which would miss and hit someone else, who then would look at her! Chasing lost dogs with her. Build her business with her. Being "known" by her. Being so very, very loved by her. I put our dogs down with her. My creative work can no longer be appreciated by her. I was held up at gun point with her. No matter what, the next day, we would overcome all adversity together. Making sure that she was okay in the middle of the night by poking her. To hold her. To hold her in the end. Her laughing. Her laughing. Getting a call from her saying "I'll be home soon, so put a potato in the oven for me." Then, I suppose, I wouldn't miss all of that.

So, what's for dessert? No, wait a minute, I'd like some more of what I had. You've run out? I don't want your fried chicken or your Dim Sum or your chatauebriand, or your pasta, or a vegeburger... I'd like more of what I had. No more? No, I haven't tasted everything on the menu, but I just can't imagine that anything could be as good as what I had, because, you see, it became good over a long period of time. That time, is gone. You can't serve up history.

Why does the soul, so vital and alive, need a damn body in the first place? We're at the end of the food chain, we don't have to kill weaker animals to survive, because no creature is going to eat us. Why a body? Because the human body is the instrument

for the soul to communicate at the highest level? Oh, so, we get our 80 or so years only to develop our communication skills? Sharing? That's our evolution? Maybe that's what we take with us. Maybe it's the many different lives that a person affects that collectively makes up that person's whole life, which is much fuller than a single life on its own. We can't take what we accomplish with us, but we can take the sharing. I know it's left behind.

You know, she would always be very affected when the character in the movie My Fair Lady, made a "break-through" after her mentor talked about the importance of language in order to communicate. She loved that moment. Not necessarily just about the language, but really about the communication... It's like she knew that humans can express themselves and connect so fully through their eyes and gestures and work and creative work. That was her. That was her. Peering into someone's soul, art, creative energy, sharing feelings, loving, connecting. That was her. That was her.