

when time stood still, and then, went on

Rob Noyes Smith

I wonder if my contemplations of a new book, "Time Interrupted" is a fore-runner of a conscious conversation with myself, devoid of any marketing or sales potential; merely a thought of where I have come from and perhaps, who knows, maybe where I am headed. ..., all in the abstract of judgement, a mere solipsistic soliloquy of insights when time stood still, and then, went on.

My very first remembrance of a flash, a different vision than the moment before, was when I was roughly two and a half years old, wandering up the road from my grandma's house (most definitely unknown to her), looking at the giant billboard on top of the Coventry Rugby grounds. Suddenly, it transformed into this mass of little dots, like ants, marching from the bottom or south to the north. I knew instantly that these were people but that was it. Prelude..., prescience..., who's to know?

At 10 years old, sitting in my Mosely Avenue Junior School class listening to Mr. Kettlewell, I suddenly knew he was going to pick me to be the class monitor for some 'outside the classroom' adventure.

Two years later, as a high school freshman, about a hundred of us turned out for rugby trials. None of us knew much about rugby except that it was a cool, tough sport to play. The trial started with a ball being tossed high into the air with the only instruction being, "Go get it." A hundred kids age twelve on a soggy soft, muddy rugby pitch milling around was fun enough, but then somehow, the ball popped out of the melee right into my waiting hands. My subsequent charge back into the scrum moved the whole pack halfway down the side line until the whistle blew. Some trials later, I was the captain of the 'probables' against the 'possibles'. Most of us came from a working-class background so togs to fit growing feet were hard to come by and made us feel somewhat inferior when playing the Grammar School boys, but we were scrappy and played hard.

Moving to Africa at thirteen was a great adventure and despite three high schools in the same year I knew this was a special place; something

lingered in my soul, emitting little radar signals barely sensed, hardly known, but there.

Later, as a young army officer in the King's African Rifles I was in charge of a platoon of thirty men, all locally recruited from Nyasaland (now Malawi), who spoke little or no English. It was my job to learn Chinyanja. The more I learned, the more I got to know these wonderful, highly humorous, hard working soldiers, and developed a love that has never diminished throughout my life and causes me to return from America frequently; a calling, tapping into my primordial being, knowing that I and everyone else emanated from there, long, long ago.

I think of my dear friend Overton who worked with me forty-two years ago in the jungles of Johannesburg, and now lives retired, back in his village near Mzimba, Malawi. He lives in a mud hut with no running water, electricity, gas or garbage disposal, happy with his cows. I live in the center of technology, trains, planes, automobiles, internet and drones, constantly changing technology..., racing toward what?

I think of some of the powerful insights I have had over the years, especially when I seemed beaten down, at the end of my tether, when my ego gave up and I felt I could go on no more. The powerful voice of my sacred self came through, bringing instant clarity, even if I didn't know how.

I have often lurched from insight to insight. Once, when I consulted a psychic, was told of two things that would come to pass, and they did. Not insignificant, trivial things, but major, life-changing things that caused me to move countries.

As I enter a more reclusive era of my life I ponder, is this all foretold?
Am I truly the captain of my soul?

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