

It was early afternoon, I was sitting in a café, waiting for Them to come.

Seated in a small chair – it felt comfortable – I played with my fingers, laid on the table board, braiding and unbraiding them again, looking at my watch from time to time. Three. The café was considerably crammed at that time of day, yet not a sign of Them. I was determined to keep waiting, for there was no other way. I was waiting for Them, and I intended to wait until they come.

Frankly speaking, there was plenty of other things I could do - anything, but sit here today. That would mean – of course - to give up the moment when They come. They come and aim for me. When I'm not here - let us say I chose to do something different than to sit here and wait for Them - They will never approach me after all. But what will They do? Shall They propose to somebody else?

With great tardiness, I looked around. The room was unquestionably packed, I found. All but few of the wee tables - so puny for a cup and saucer to barely fit on it - were engaged. What will They think when taking the first step inside the café, I wondered. They step in, look round, start to think and say something like, "Very occupied indeed, plenty to choose from." I began to examine all those around me, very carefully, one after another. There was a lot of them - those around me - yet no one seems to be the like They could approach. Everybody was seated, drinking coffee. I too was drinking coffee. However, not one of them was drinking coffee the way I was. Already that was an adequate indication, that I'm the only one They can speak to, even if I wouldn't be here today.

Suppose They would arrive at this very moment. They would most likely take a great look around, as I did - that means thoroughly. I was at that moment spinning my head so powerfully that my neck started to hurt. Those seated around examined me with interest. Naturally, I provided a rare sight, and I don't mean merely the way I was turning my head, but mainly the fact, that they had no other choice, but to observe me. Simultaneously, if They would come just now and see me, They would be peering with curiosity. But, those around me were not Them. Nothing could make sense to these passer-sitters. And so after I finished my observing, I had to admit, no one could attract Their attention, but me.

I glanced at my wristwatch. Four. At first, I planned to order another coffee, yet remembering my preceding look around, I recalled, all the others around me were drinking coffee - and now I certainly don't want to make an impression of someone who wants to differ, not to be merely another coffee drinker. That is nothing like me. As I noted before, in case of Their arrival, I would be the sole candidate to be noticed, even if I would be - let us say - drinking coffee with the rest of them, and more importantly, as I mentioned earlier, no one drinks coffee as I do, that is something I am aware of above all. I am, merely trying to explain this - all the others came here to drink their coffees. Only I, exclusively, arrived here today, to wait for Them; wait until They appear and aim for my table. On these grounds, I cannot sit and drink coffee as the others. My stay here has a wholly different purpose.

Somebody, servant-like whizzed past me, and I succeeded in ordering a pitcher of red wine. After a momentary contemplation, I post-ordered the coffee, honestly because I felt a taste for another cup, and I don't intend to dissect this any longer. And thus I sat and enjoyed my pitcher. The wine was good, and after a while, I requested a refill. My spirits were lifted, thanks to the wine, yet not exclusively. I felt splendid, after all, I was waiting for Them. Any minute now, They will heave into the view, They shall notice me and aim for my table and then?

To speak the truth, I was entirely incapable of grasping an idea of how this scenario will evolve. I simply did not assign unnecessary importance to the matter. Crucial was that They will arrive and seek me out. Of course me. They will spot me and aim for my table. I felt splendid. The wine was wonderful, and as its level in the pitcher was on the decrease, I contemplated about how wonderful I feel every single day and that I also am, in fact, wonderful.

Indeed, I mostly experience jolly moments. Perhaps that is one of the many reasons why They should pay me a visit. Those around me are hardly able to spend days as only I can spend. It was entirely clear to me as I was observing them earlier. Nevertheless, I deemed necessary to perform another look around, merely to satisfy myself of the status quo of their mediocrity. Scoffing at myself, I had to admit, nothing had changed about those around me. The clarity of that notion swayed me like a fresh breeze; it was out of the question for those poor devils to spend their miserable days as I spend mine. I saw it without any difficulty, let alone what They shall see.

The most peculiar thought had entered my brains, "Do I pity them?" Mind you, they shall never experience such moments, never will these buggers be waiting for Them and vice versa They, will never seek these wretched souls that were surrounding me. Furthermore, my passer-sitters might be ignorant of Their existence. In that case, I shall not pity them. The ignorance is blissful.

Reluctantly, I again steered my sight at the wristwatch. Embarrassment intruded into my well-being when I had to admit I was hungry. How to escape from such a non-wonderful situation, I wondered. Grasping a sleeve of a person who rushed around me, I demanded a menu. To my luck, the individual indeed was on the local payroll and provided the menu at a reasonable time. Peanuts were the only eatable item this establishment had to offer. That discovery left me unsatisfied. Could I pop off shortly to another joint? There must be plenty around. I did not know that for certain, yet it somehow seemed logical. Just a couple minutes in some tavern then, a few bites gulped down in swiftness - simply to assuage my hunger which I momentarily considered as the first inconvenience of my otherwise wonderful day.

Despite my ignorance of any inns serving food in my neighbourhood, I dared to estimate my absence in here on about ten minutes. Ten meaningless minutes. That is not much. However, those ten minutes could turn out to be very meaningful in case They would appear. Any minute during those ten - when I will be out there, satisfying a need as superficial as hunger - They might show up! Arrive, look around and not to find. Simultaneously, it is possible that They don't know, They should be looking for me in this exact café - at least, They don't know it yet.

Of course, one glance at myself among those others, that is all it would take. They shall say "Oh, that's why we're here." Everything would be alright again. Or, They might come with an uncertain urge to carry something out, and so They take a look around and see - nothing. Sure, They will see those seated around and one vacant chair - the one that had been occupied until those ill-fated ten minutes - with a paid bill placed on the table as the only remnant of me.

I am not going anywhere, I understood. It is unacceptable. To leave, would be as to send the whole day to hell. The kind of decision turning today into one of the previous days when They had not approached me. I shall not let this happen! Honest joy filled my veins again as I cheered how promptly and aptly had I been able to resolve the development of the affairs. With new gusto, I drank the wine, or at least what was left in the pitcher. I was still waiting. As the afternoon wore on, I had to admit, my enthusiasm is not as it was before. I was unable to resist the unpleasant tension of an empty stomach, and my options were rather frustrating me. Where can They be? A question rooted down on my lip. Why are They not here?

My thoughts, stupefied, whirled with rising tendency around food of which I could not stop daydreaming. Why are They not here, I asked. Uncertain suspicion started eroding my confidence. Let us suppose, They are not here, because They are elsewhere. That is not hard to comprehend. Wait, can They be there? Is it possible, They are at the moment in that other establishment, the one about which existence and proximity I have only a vague notion; They are in this tavern, They look around in search of - what? Something. They look for something that had brought Them there. Something, They would identify as soon as Their eyes would fish my image out of the others; They would spot me and say "Well, there you are, you're the reason why we're here. But They won't say any of this, because They won't see anything, I won't be there. This is unthinkable.

This whole affair made my stomach ache. Again, I recalled my hunger, but at the same time, that very idea miraculously steered my thinking towards another option. What if all those probabilities are in fact my starving hallucinations? Can this be? Maybe it can. However, doubts, thick and dark as oil stain ate into my conscience and infested my, until then, invincible assuredness.

Those who I had been waiting for are in that tavern all the time. This was the title of tonight's play of suspicion. My Gordian knot, you might say. Of course, I could rise up from the chair in which I had spent the last couple of hours, leave this café and go look for Them. Cut the imaginary knot, so to speak. Who can guarantee, They are truly there? What if They are somewhere entirely else? Most likely, on Their way here! To think that I might try to cut the knot with the wrong tool, a blunt sword, or worse! Make a fool of myself that is not for me.

Additionally, leaving now and setting off to look for Them in some vague place, would be admitting that my time in here today, at this café, by this table, waiting for Them, was entirely in vain. Again, something I cannot let happen. How do you think I would look in front of all the others?

After another swift glance, I noticed the little hand passing the sixth hour. I caught a side of somebody's back arching in front of me, intuitively I asked for a bowl of peanuts. I ate it in excessive haste - the reason beyond this being my famishment. Demanding another one, I decided to eat more tardily this time. After all, to consume - even such a thing as peanuts - in the fashion, I got hold of the first bowl that would undoubtedly become more to those around me. I am, wonderful. I'm having a splendid time, and I am still waiting for Them.

Nibbling at the peanuts, I was fantasizing about Them. Do They eat peanuts? The answer was unknown to me. I ate slowly and with grace; however, I could not say with certainty, if my choice of eatable couldn't be of some worry to Them. "Peanuts?" They shall say, "That is truly unexceptional. That is not wonderful and splendid, and you are neither! You are, in fact, the same as the other ones." I looked around me and felt that someone at the back was nibbling from a bowl, perhaps peanuts. I was not sure, the table was very far, and it was getting dark.

From somewhere of the street a sudden draft brought seven bell strikes. I had been here considerably long, I thought and turned my attention back to the peanut dilemma. I came to the conclusion of demanding another pitcher to accompany my bowl of peanuts. When it appeared on my table, I took some peanuts and sipped the wine. It felt very foreign to me, and my sensation about all this was entirely foreign. Relieved, I sensed reappearing confidence and congratulated myself on how tactfully had I solved the unpleasantness. If They would enter, right now, and looked at me as I was eating my peanuts and drinking my wine, They would inevitably say, "Oh, what a wonderful fellow, foreign, in some way." I felt splendid again.

Those around me began to leave, and the café was becoming depopulated. Darkness cloaked the town behind my window as drowsiness stole into my thoughts. Where on earth are They? What is delaying Them, when I am here all that time! I was forced to admit that the waiting left me feeling a bit under the weather. That had not lifted my spirits, and simultaneously I recalled drinking wine substantially. Of course, because I was waiting for Them. What opinion might They have about it, I did not know.

Could it displease Them? Just imagine - They finally arrive and search the half-emptied room, They see me and say, "Well, there he is." Between those tiny tables and wretched little chairs, They aim to me and discover, that I am considerably tired. "But friend, aren't you sleepy?" Promptly collaring someone from the staff They demand my bill, and They read out loud that I had consumed that day: several coffees and one, two, three pitchers of red wine.

On top of that two bowls with peanuts. What impression that would make, I wonder. Decided not to wait a single moment I briskly obtained a bill, paid it in full, torn it into pieces which I buried into a flowerpot suitably located by my chair. Afterwards, in an absentee fashion, I ordered a tall glass of fresh orange juice, then another and one more. I believed, if They would enter just now, claiming my bill, I had secured Their satisfaction. Then why was there no sign of Them?

Sinking into a bed-temper, I contemplated about my strained wrist, while unconsciously taking another painful look at my watch. Eight. Shall I consider the possibility, They really might be somewhere else all the time? Is it me, who arrived at the wrong spot? I machined the idea thoroughly and at great length. Suppose They are elsewhere, while I am here, They are bound to come here sooner or later because They are looking for me, and I'm nowhere else, but here. When They don't find me there - at the unknown place They're wasting Their time at - They shall hardly linger, without achieving what They came for. After all, I am wonderful, I live splendidly, I spend my days as nobody else, I drink coffee with gusto and consume peanuts in a foreign fashion, I can take a grand look around, and I deal with things logically on principal.

Here in this café, I sit, waiting for Them; I am not tired, not even what could be fitted under a fingernail, and if I would, I know how to resolve this. So I was still waiting. None of those who were around me was left in the café. I was alone. It was dark outside. After a while, the café closed. Some individual, who probably worked here, passed my table and noticed me. He saw me, aimed at my direction and vehemently suggested me to bugger off.