

© Copyright 2018-10-27 Brett Paufler

#

Letter to -----

#

Which lies to tell?

#

That's the real question.

#

Perhaps, it is best to let you figure it out for yourself.

#

#

#

I got a letter the other day (email in this day and age) from a long lost friend... or so he says. Truthfully, I didn't even remember his name.

#

Him? Yes.

#

His name? No.

#

His email was short, as they usually are:

Are you you?

Do I have the right person?

With one lone additional fact, as if that would jog the memory. Surely, you must remember me.

#

My email was longer, as they usually are:

I am me.

And I am sure I am who you are looking for.

Sadly, I remember almost nothing about you.

#

I guess that pair of transcriptions would be one of those lies.

#

Closer to the truth, my email ran nine lines (657 characters), while his ran four lines (296 characters)... including an automatically inserted advertisement at the end for his text editor of choice.

#

Go Windows 10!

#

My OS of choice.

#

Thus, mine was twice as long.

#

Meaning: I win!

#

But are we so petty as to be keeping score?

#

Um, yes.

#

We are.

#

I win.

#

Don't be trying to take that away from me.

#

But I don't, actually, win.

#

I'd much rather have the friendship and the relationship than the win.

#

But what friendship?

#

What relationship?

#

Shall we revisit his email, once again?

#

Hey,

I came across this thing that reminded me of you.

Are you you?

If not, let me know, so I can continue my search.

#

And my response was, perhaps, highly non-gratifying.

#

Oh, hey,

I don't remember much about you, just these four things:

1: the color of that shirt you liked

2: your favorite television show at the time

3: a very minor aspiration of yours, surely long since
gone by

4: and a regret from your youth, seeing as how you were
but a youth at the time.

So, what's next?

#

You see, we hadn't talked for... eh, I shall call it fifty years?

#

Yeah, that sounds about right.

#

So, we had not talked for fifty years.

#

And during that time, all those familiar milestones of life (the good times, the bad times; marriages, divorces; children, death; his, mine), we did not share with (or bother to include) the other.

#

I mean, come on! No wedding invite? After all we'd been through?

#

But what had we been through?

#

I can't remember.

#

Those days are long gone by, fifty years gone by, a lifetime gone by.

#

And so, the real question is 'Why now?'

#

Coupled closely with 'Why me?'

#

And given the tone of my response, I am not surprised that I have not heard back from him.

#

I no longer expect to.

#

Eh, my tone wasn't, really, that bad.

#

But I did ask the question: 'What do you want?'

#

Not that that's the hard one.

#

No, that's a softball question. And if you can't field that one, I've got no use for you.

#

But those other two?

#

Those are hard ones.

#

'Why now?'

#

My answer is easy.

#

You see, I got this letter and it got me to thinking.

#

And as for 'Why you?'

#

Well, I guess that's what I hope to explain.

#

#

#

{This project was abandoned almost as soon as I started writing it. The good version (not yet written), goes more along the lines of:

Are you the one who...

Are you the one who...

Are you the one who...

With a chapter devoted to each.

Other projects have interjected themselves. And I am in the midst of a different novel. But the idea that induced these

few pages may just induce me to write a few more in the future.

But sadly, not today.

2019-09-06

© Brett Paufler}