

Oscar Parker

Narrative Contest Submission

Nature Of

There is no such thing as a line. You may think there is, you may have some ancient, or newly born memory of your first introduction to the concept, yet it does not exist. Nothing is ever perfectly in line, and nothing ever will be. This is not just a property of molecules, some mysterious force of atoms, some scientific lab-bound procedure without practicality, or an unwritten rule of the world around us, but rather a lesson that the universe shows us through its physicality. Many find it hard to accept imperfection. Some find it impossible. But the truth of the matter is that life itself is imperfect. Nothing in this universe lines up, correlates, or remains the same. And as you travel, smaller and smaller, complexity becomes infinitely chaotic and unorganized, dissolving into messes of theoretical attractions, forces, and limitless components. So many things happen in just one nanosecond, and the space inside that nanosecond, and the infinite time inside of that bound, that that amount itself is infinite. As I lived my life, I realized that I can never know the scale of Earth, or the scale of myself, or the scale of the atoms within myself. My brain can only truly process what it is receiving. The universe covers every single point on the spectrum of time, size, and change. Therefore, true perspective of oneself is only achievable through omnipotence, through an impossible view of all information of all time and all places. My life, everything I have changed, everything I have done, everything I have left unfinished, had already been swept away in the very instant after it happened. Yet, even in this terrifying realization, everything seems so perfectly harmonious, and all beauty is still beautiful, and sadness is still known as only fleeting, and my life still unchanging in its presence, and most of the day seems so simple. Accepting imperfection is just one part of the human condition. But creating imperfection is the work of everything in existence.

Once, when I was younger, I found myself friendless. I had tried to gain solitude in other people, yet the divides between us were much too large, and eventually, we both lost each other. I was filled with terrible, constant feeling, and I was not sure how to pick back up again. It was as if I looked up one night and the stars themselves were gone; the situation seemed out of place and out of control to me on a monumental level. Yet eventually I realized that acceptance was the only path to solitude. My life would've never been the same if I spent it dwelling in the past, the imperfect past. I couldn't achieve perfection through acceptance. Truly, it is impossible to do so. But through acceptance, everything became less imperfect. It was not instant, nor was it quick, nor did those feelings dissipate the instant I told them 'Goodbye'. Yet the path my life took after this acceptance took the imperfection I was feeling and chipped away at it, slowly turning towards perfection, towards a better life. Acceptance is like a side of a shape. As you accept more, as you turn back on those taking your happiness, a side is added. Soon, the shape

resembles a circle. Yet as you look towards the sides, we will see that it was never a circle. It was a collective of all acceptances, of all the sides, reaching towards infinity, towards perfection, yet never achieving it. There is a melancholy element to this allegory, though. Perfection, unachievable? Surely life and acceptances must be useless, without purpose, an unending, futile quest towards an unending goal. Yet that is unimportant! Perfection has never been an element of life. There is no scientific definition for the term. The real importance lies in whether or not you strive towards it, not quell it, denying its importance. Although its existence is impossible, perfections reward those who look for them. The natural flow of the search for it is that of self-improvement. Perfection cannot be achieved if you yourself are inherently flawed. That is why the journey towards it is so beneficial; perfection is a detox of what holds you back, whether its initial fear, circumstances, mental weakness, or incapability, all can be stripped away through the tumultuous wash of the way there.

Dreams are an element of perfection, as well. The grand dream is perfection, yet we cannot reach this enlightenment. Yet our dreams that run along the way towards perfection, the nodes of achievement that give us a taste of perfection's gratification, are what really drives the human spirit. In the same way that our life contains meaning through mortality, our achievements carry weight through their distance from perfection. After my younger self began to collect his friendships again, another fracture happened. Two more were gone from his life, and soon he found that their connections he had so very treasured had to be cut. The mutuals and the places were pruned away from his life. The web of support grew ever smaller. Yet the web-maker could still dream. And the dream then was to go out and meet people, and when it did happen, he got a piece of perfection. And that piece was a grain of said in the mountain of life's achievement, yet it held just as much significance to me as any other. The truth is that when you achieve this grain of perfection, nobody can take it away from you; It remains with you forever, turning over in the cavity of your mind and filling the holes in your conscious. This is the concept of what gives us the power to be human. That grain of perfection in your mind is the most important facet of our lives; It is not physical energy, but rather mental energy. These achievements are what keeps our minds healthy. Being unable to accept imperfection is like a cancer on the mind: With that flawed worldview, these grains of perfection soon become malignant. No one is taught this, but you *can* change how these grains affect you. Some may see the locus of life as above, as the puppet is to the strings, but the truth of the matter is that the strings were never there. You were only told so and never learned to look towards the sky. Telling yourself that perfection is achievable poisons the achievements within your life. It is as if you are comparing a number to infinity; Perfection, much the same, is not a real thing, just an unreachable, no, nonexistent concept.

The mind is a supercomputer. 100 billion neurons. $10^{1,000,000,000,000}$ possible pathways. Yet the mind has a bug, a simple flaw that keeps us at bay, a failsafe in our genetic code. We let others decide for us. Nobody realizes that the most free they will ever be was before

they were ever born. The only real rules of life are that there are none; Nothing can actually tell you to do anything. Everything is overcomeable, and when it isn't, it is death. Making your own choices is one of the hardest things for a human to do. Your life has been the telephone operator, wiring predispositions, attitudes, emotional response, and necessities into the very fibre of your consciousness. And your consciousness. The most important thing in the universe. Why? Because the human consciousness is the only thing we can be really sure exists. There is always a logical solution for something's existence, yet many do not realize there is also an equally logical conclusion for its nonexistence. Nobody can ever experience anything anyone else ever will. Every single aspect of your life is infinitely different from anybody else's, and this is another brick in the wall of the human condition. But it is also another page in the most hopeful and enlightening story; human perseverance. We as a species have overcome this flaw in our genetic code. We have rewritten the most definite law in the entire universe: We have created empathy, we have created love. And that is the greatest achievement of the human race; We have overcome our own imperfection and taken hold. We have looked skywards, and the strings have fallen apart. Yet so many bend down and tied them back up. So many succumb back into imperfection, into selfishness and unfeeling instinct. They fight the greatest achievement and greatest quality of human life and keep themselves in the dark.

For neither perfection nor apathy is the nature of humanity. People strive to be something too often; too little do they strive just to be. At the end of the day, perfection is a total impossibility, and the only way to live is to accept the natural imperfection of the universe. Nothing lines up, nothing correlates, and nothing is ever the same. But that is what gives the value to life. As said, the distance from perfection is the force behind our every move. But to accept this distance, to look at the great silver city on the horizon and know you will never reach it; That is the only way to live.