

A THOUSAND YEARS AGO

A SHORT STORY
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Four friends decide to enjoy a Saturday evening on Greenhouse Island. They partake in a soccer game to conclude their day on the new age Earth powered by Nitrogen and Greenhouse gases. When the game ends the Sun's final moments set upon the group leading to a discussion on Earth's energy sources, particularly methods from a thousand years ago. While the group converse their ignorance is enabled by their arrogance, competing to be correct.

On Greenhouse Island; an island near the Americas in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, a group of kids partake in a friendly game of soccer. The public field is jovial with citizens of the island enjoying their Saturday evening at the Park of Palm Trees. The temperature is mild for its tropical climate, the wind is subtle but pleasurable, and the sunset begins to beget the stars. Though before the Sun moves back East the star observes the park below it.

Milo, a teenage boy, dribbles the soccer ball down the field crossing defender after defender. He triumphs to midfield greeted by more opposers, forced to send a wall pass in his teammate Nikoli's direction. Nikoli controls the ball attracting the defenders with the magnet. An odd one out of the bunch increases his intensity, prepared to sacrifice his body in this friendly game for the pride of victory. Nikoli impetuously passes the ball back to Milo, though this odd defender uses his right cleat to dig through the dirt sliding to tackle the ball away. His efforts come up short, he misses the ball and takes Nikoli out instead. A young lady rushes to Nikoli's defense, reprimanding this defender even though she has played his role repulsively during this brief game.

Milo continues toward the goal using move after move to evade defenders displaying exceptional skill, only to alert his final opponent, the Goalie. Milo breathes slowly while facing his antagonist entering his home docile and at full speed. He baits the goalie to abandon his post threatening the opponent's win the closer he gets. The goalie dives for the ball betting his teams dignity, when Milo lobs the ball above the goalie to himself avoiding the goalie's efforts completely. Milos' defeated antagonist slides through the dirt in disappointment only able to spectate the spectacle. Though determination displays itself in the form of another defender. Milo and this defender are both insistent on saving their team's glory. This defender steps in front of Milo, assured he has the game-saving tackle. Milo, unphased, reacts shrewdly, spinning away from their determination and forging his own, bearing a well-deserved

goal and ending the game.

Milo's team wins! They celebrate like they'd won the world cup, running the length of the field and screaming with joy directing their enthusiasm at the bystanders who enjoy the park. Some bystanders watch confused while some decide to amuse the teenagers and join in on the celebration.

Time has passed since Milo's heroic efforts, the losers have now packed up their clothes and are on their way back to the mainland, riding shuttles powered by plants and nitrogen due to Earth's enlightenment throughout the years. The sun has further descended and the public park is nearly abandoned. Milo; the young boy with a chain dangling a tiny star emblem and professional replica soccer jersey; and two other young boys; one matching the lady of the group protected with sports gear head to toe and the other with dyed red hair and a scar about two inches under his left cheekbone remain in the park. They sit in the midfield observing the Sun's final moments of the day, while the field begins to repair itself from the damage of the game.

"Milo, way to go," Ghee, the young man with his past riddled on his face said.

"It's no biggie man, I wouldn't have been able to do it without that sick pass from Nikoli,"

"Don't worry about it," Nikoli furtively said.

"Would you quit being so modest, it was an amazing pass!" Malaya the young lady who matches the swagger of Nikoli said avidly.

Nikoli looks at his girlfriend red in the face with an indolent smile.

"I'm sorry –"

"Stop saying sorry! You even said it to the guy who did that illegal tackle,"

Milo and Ghee laugh hysterically watching the two feud. Nikoli looks around for help tumbling in the face, while Malaya shakes her head using her hands to hide his ignorance.

"Would you guys cut it out?" Nikoli pleaded with his two friends' obnoxious impulses.

"I don't know what to say Nikoli," Milo said while catching his breath from laughing.

"You're like one of the funniest guys I know man,"

The laughter begins to die while the breeze breathes. They listen to silence staring at the sun exhausted in the prime of their youthful ignorant ways.

"We should get going guys it's getting late," Malaya suggested.

"Late!? It's only seven o'clock," Ghee responded.

"Don't you see the sun is setting,"

"So what it's not like we're living during the Corona Pandemic we've got nothing but time,"

"What do you know about the Corona Pandemic?"

"It was in twenty twenty-three,"

"What else?"

"They named it after a beer,"

Nature's breath blows through the silence as the group sits silent ignoring Ghee's bombastic answer. An abrupt notification breaks nature's silence. The forearms of the young kids become illuminated. The boys ignore theirs except for Nikoli while he and Malaya conscientiously check theirs. Their skin hosts an electronic device releasing a holographic notice that curfew will be starting once the sun sets; these devices are known as BioDevices, a device known worldwide.

"See what I'm saying,"

"We can break curfew, we're kids it's what they expect," Milo said rebelliously.

"We won't be able to get anything to eat, once curfew is in effect. I'm going into town I'll see you guys later," Malaya said.

Malaya packs up her belongings and heads into town on a surfer hoverboard powered by Nitrogen. The boys continue to behold the evening sky, eventually ignoring nature's beauty to scroll through social media on their BioDevices. Enjoying the weather the trio comfortably ignore one another.

"The curfew for us is stupid anyways why can't kids be out after sunset, it's better than when the sun's out," Milo said impulsively breaking their hypnosis.

"I'm with you Milo, adventurers like us shouldn't be confined,"

"Ghee you never follow the curfew, who's confining you?" Nikoli asked.

"The man is,"

"What an old phrase," Nikoli said vociferating a contagious laughter. Milo continues to scroll through augmented space history as their rebellion against the man grows closer when a post from an unverified space page catches his attention.

"Guys! Guys! You won't believe it,"

"What?"

"Did you know, all the way back in the year Twenty Twenty-Three they used to use the sun to create energy, by sending astronauts into the sun's core,"

"No way, let me see,"

The boys all gather around Milos' bio device to analyze the post. The post is consistent with what Milo told the boys, placing them further into denial. Continuing their curiosity they see an astronaut flying a rocket into the sun and marching into its core. These elements of the document do nothing but create further tension between the two differing opinions.

"No way," Nikoli said.

"It says it right here, they even got video," Milo refuted.

"That was a thousand years ago, it's not possible to still have data from that long ago, it was all destroyed with the dinosaurs during a volcanic eruption in the Silk Valley," Ghee said.

"It's silicon valley," Nikoli responded.

"Either way it's gone, I could never believe they would use the sun for energy, it's too hot for

that. You know how many things would catch on fire?" Ghee said.

"He might have a point, Milo,"

"I don't know man, I've got the evidence right here until you guys show me something different it's facts,"

The boys look at the sunset perplexed by the information they've just learned. All internally wondering if a thousand years ago, during the monumental Corona Pandemic, if humans did something as risky as using the sun for energy. Something unfathomable to them in an era where Nitrogen and Plants are the main sources of energy along with the abundant water vapor. Having a hole in three layers of the atmosphere, founded at one point in the last 700 years, Mankind avoided catastrophes by funneling the abounding Nitrogen in and out of the atmosphere using Tuf and Shu Clouds. These are twin clouds, created through brilliance, that diffuse the Sun's ultraviolet rays and gather potential energy from Greenhouse Gases and convert it into sustainable energy. The accumulated water vapor with other Greenhouse Gases warms the Earth's surface once released by Tuf and Shu. Tuf and Shu eventually led to the natural creation of more clouds mirroring their molecular components giving scientists the opportunity to turn the excess gases into energy. This has essentially led to a more conservative and advanced society, as some would call the future.

"Nope, I'm not believing it, you know what they say. Check your sources. Using the sun just doesn't make sense," Ghee said.

Milo is furious foiling his face with red and wrinkles,

"Well Mr. Sources, what do you think they did one thousand years ago?" Milo asked.

"Well if you must know, I've read—"

"Read?" His two companions both ask facetiously.

"Yea, I read, anyways it said that they used to use this old magic from black magical rocks to summon spirits and send them into caves to mine more magic rocks for power. Burning it around dancing dwarfs to create fuel. In those wild times, they had to do whatever they could to summon the energy for basic needs like lights and fuel for vehicles that only traveled on land, water, or air. Desperate to never go back to riding wildlife and using stone tools to hunt dinosaurs. The spirits were dangerous causing cave collapses, wars, and more. They'd use the rock for generations leading to the three holes in the sky, forcing the use of Nitrogen, Plants, and Clouds,"

"What book did you read that in? I don't think it knows when dinosaurs existed,"

"I don't, I mean I can't remember but that's not important, what's important is that I'm right, it's more believable than using the Sun. I mean look at it all it does is rise and set how can that bring us energy,"

"It does more than that," Nikoli said.

“But I’ll be honest you’re both way off,”

Nikoli activates his BioDevice and begins to load a file he found a while back. The hologram is projected buffered in an augmented room dedicated to alternative history. The source, like the boy who wears the star necklace, is unverified.

“Ghee, I want you to know what you said makes no sense at all man,” Milo said.

“What do you mean, I read it,”

“You read wrong,”

“It’s more believable than using the sun, how can you even absorb the energy of the sun without melting away,”

“I don’t know maybe they freeze their astronaut suits, have you ever seen one of these magical rocks,”

“Yup, it’s the stuff the fat guy from Christmas brings to bad kids,”

“That’s coal, it’s fake,”

“Coal is magic! And it’s real!”

“Where’d you even get a book from, the cost for those is crazy,”

“I found it, you want one I can sell it to you?”

Nikoli stops scrolling and lands on a file with a neutron sign.

“I found it, now both of you shut up because you’re both wrong,”

Milo and Ghee hover over Nikoli’s shoulders looking at the documents he has projected in front of the trio. The title reads The Nuclear Power Plant. They look in awe at the familiar neutron sign, a sign they can’t seem to remember. A flower is instilled within the logo emitting energy toward the Neutron sign, edited distinctively like radical propaganda.

“What is a power plant?” Milo asked.

“Well fellas it’s said back in the day, I mean in the 1950s—”

“1950s!?” Ghee and Milo expelled simultaneously.

“Yes more than a millennia ago, they used the atoms of plants to create a fission process and power the world all the way until The Great—”

“What is fission?” Nikoli asked.

“That doesn’t matter right now, but they used plant atoms to create energy in these humongous facilities filled with immoral experiments,”

While Nikoli finishes explaining to the guys his theory on Earth’s past technologies, they scroll through the documents looking at images and pictures from the past. Meanwhile back on the mainland Malaya is at a tiki bar eating fajitas and drinking smoothies. The area is festive with a surprisingly youthful presence.

”I should hurry back before the sun sets,” Malaya ruminated.

Back on the public soccer field, the boys are in awe of what they are seeing, the document hosts images of Venus fly traps, deteriorated power plants, nuclear waste, gigantic cylinder structures depositing smoke, dead fish, destroyed land, and more.

“It’s even said they’d have meltdowns where the plants of the power plant would release toxins through the community poisoning anything natural. The Power Plant plants have even caused mutations. There’s a cartoon about a town that once existed known as Springfield based on the true story of a mutated man who worked at a power plant and his family. It’s believed the radiation of the plants went to the plant used to create Beer and mutated the whole town into yellow monsters, the man was known as Homer,”

The boys look at an image of Homer Simpson, from the show The Simpsons, sitting at his desk at the power plant drinking a beer to conclude the document.

“What!? Nuclear power? It sounds just like what it says it is a cartoon,” Milo said.

“Yellow people, Power Plants, that Nuclear stuff sounds just as delusional as using the sun,” Ghee said.

“The proof is right here,” Nikoli says while referring to the document’s picture of Homer Simpson.

“So you’re saying all yellow people have radiation poisoning,” Milo asked.

“When have you ever seen a yellow person?” Nikoli asked.

“I see them all the time, everywhere just look around,”

“You guys sound stupid, using magic rocks and the sun couldn’t even compare, let’s be honest this is the closest to the truth, think about it we even use plants now, so it just makes sense,”

“I don’t know it’s something about the coal that makes sense, why would bad kids get a lump of it, if it didn’t have magical powers,”

“How does that make sense man?”

“Because the magic would make them good. What about using the sun makes sense?”

“Astronauts, if there’s an astronaut involved it’s real,”

“You’ve got to be kidding me, out of all three which one makes oxygen?” Nikoli asks Ghee

“Trick question none,”

While the trio bicker on their conspiracy theories, Malaya hover surfs back onto the field right as the sunset has disappeared replaced by its counterpart, the Moon. She still wears her helmet and protective leather jumpsuit. She halts her surfboard thirty centimeters in the air and hops off while the gust from her movements runs along her back. The slight winds catch the boy’s attention simultaneously as she notices their bickering.

“You guys ready yet?”

“Good Malayas here, she’s smart, she can settle this,” Milo suggests.

Malaya walks forward fully geared from her surf, before she can get her helmet off she is bombarded

by the enthusiasm of the boys. Each one on their knees was certain that she'd declare one of them the smartest.

"Malaya!" They all shouted.

Shocked by this attention she freezes, wide-eyed and confused.

"What is it?" She asked while removing her helmet.

"Didn't the Earth use the Sun for energy in the year Twenty Twenty-three,"

"No wasn't it coal,"

"Malaya tell them it was the Nuclear Power Plants,"

"It was all of them, you idiots, you guys need to go to a library or better yet do some homework,"

The boys look at each other all impressed by their supposed intelligence, nodding to one another; succeeding in this debate as wise men.

"Come on, let's go the Sun has set and the field has completely healed, we should get home before Tuf and Shu release the Greenhouse Gasses and the Green Hued-Rainbow,"

They all proceed to pack their belongings and gear up to ride their hover surfboards.

"Maybe you guys should pay attention in class you won't have to spend an hour debating nonsense, magical rocks, astronauts on the sun's core, plants that use atomic energy, Homer Simpson," Malaya laughs hysterically at the once wise trio alerted to their ignorant ways. They look straight, maybe maturing, understanding how the spell of victory works, or excited to teach what has been taught, we could never know because pride would never tell. "Where do you guys come up with this stuff? It sounds like the conspiracy literature of the ancient Reddit library from the last iPhone XXV," Malaya asked while surfing through the Park of the Palm Trees as they head home after a regular day on Earth in the year 3023.

The End.