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2021 words

Death by Internet

When William was a child, television came into use.
Most around him turned to screens.

He went on living outdoors as much as he could. He mostly skipped tv. He wasn't well-suited to passive spectating,

He couldn't explain that when he was a child.

He liked being around people.

Sitting together, watching television, didn't seem much like being around people. to him.

He couldn't explain that very well either. He didn't have the words for it yet, nor very deep understanding of human relationships.

When William watched television with other people, he tried to convince them there were more interesting things to do. They could go with him, do things with him, explore the woods or play by the creek or in the creek, discover ever more species of life that live in water or near the water or in the woods and meadows, figure out how they lived, why they lived that way.

He tried to convince television watchers "programs need a lot more development to be something we devote our time and energy to."

He didn't fully understand what motivated him to move away from screens, He didn't have the words yet to explain to other people, either.

People watching television don't need or want critiques of what they watch, nor any kind of conversation about watching or anything else, so he left them and went outside and did something else, played in water, saw life around him.

Television never became an important part of his life.

Many of his jobs, much of his existence, he lived away from electricity and had no t.v.

He married, had kids, stuff like that.

After he had lived for a while, he pulled together his thoughts from years of working in wilder places, far from densely-populated places. He wanted to write a book about

his experiences, about his thoughts, about the wild animals
he saw, about nature all around him, birds, the earth and
stars and moon and sun, the ocean, what lived in the ocean,
about life

and about the thoughts and experiences and life his wife
and two daughters lived, grew into. Eventually, they did
live in places with electricity.

Kids grew up and left home. Kids do stuff like that.

His wife, Lalalania, stayed with him, moved her
creative projects forward, grew spiritually, used an
electronic notebook when it helped her, never watched
television, watched movies sometimes on a tv set

Through the years William worked,
availability of his time

kept his writing to shorter pieces, poems, essays, short
pieces of fiction, songs,

notes

Then he wrested time from everything he did
stayed up late

days passing to weeks, months

wrote two books

Wanted to write more

books

Aware of time passing
rapidly

Others went on making money

made more money

Maybe he should do that, he thought
seek money

It had never worked for him,
to seek money beyond need

Like John said, "A man has to do what a man has to
do."

William cleared room on his desk and in his filing
cabinet and started work on a much longer book about the
world, about animals and plants and places, Life

People he knew

bought machines to help them write

communicate
know where they were
physically
psychologically
socially
stylistically
consumerly
educationally
spiritually
He should be like them
some insisted
contact the world
and create
through machines

He thought of alcoholics he knew
who
seeing someone might be free and,
by contrast,
make users more aware of their enslavement
to a jealous and damaging taskmaster
tried to get him to drink
tried to recapture
anyone who had found freedom

Huey Waldo said, "I quit drinking
For almost four months I quit drinking
I live with my sister
If I stay inside, I'm okay
but I want to go out sometimes
look at the world
walk downtown and see places
people
but they never leave me alone
'Have a beer Huey
One beer ain't going to hurt you
Drink a beer
Lean against the rock wall
behind the dirt parking lot
at the liquor store
Drink a beer and sing opera
Like the old days
Just like the old days

Be friends
What the hell,
you kick dust in our faces now?
don't like us anymore
better than us, now?"

He said, William said,
"I will pray for you, Huey Waldo.
I will pray for you."

It was all William could think of to do
He couldn't keep those guys away from Huey Waldo,
Huey Waldo away from them. He couldn't threaten those
guys, kill those guys?

Huey would never want anyone to murder, for him, for
anything
and William didn't want murder
did not want any form of violence

Late night, he heard Huey's voice
Huey sat against the wall
in the dirt parking lot
and sang opera
Huey's high and beautiful voice
reverberated against the dark night
He sang of hard times, loss
grief in the world,
lives lost to enslavement

Late in his life, William bought an electronic tablet, so
he could read from multiple sources, switch rapidly from
book to book to book during his spiritual studies, so he
could research online for his writing, look up words,
identify birds, research animals

he wrote about

Before he bought the tablet, he avoided technical stuff,
mechanical stuff, technological stuff. He avoided entering
the modern, industrial world all he could,
but he thought it might be worth buying a tablet, with a
keyboard, so he could process words to make files
with a printer to print his files
He could write much faster,
revise and revise and revise so easily, just delete stuff

and put other stuff in, no more typing the whole thing over and over again

so much faster

Research online is easier

and faster then going to the library.

It was almost like they said, like they told him when they tried to convince him he should be more modern

But he read news when he got his tablet

It was new to him, to have news of the world available, right in front of him. He felt responsible to be informed.

Maybe that idea, that it's responsible to be informed about what's going on in the world, stayed with him from his high school and college days

Reading news didn't last.

After three days, he only skimmed for the main points or read headlines. There's so much bad news.

You can't carry bad news around in your head all the time. He didn't want all that stuff in his head. He quit reading news. It was the same thing over and over and over and just jumbled up his mind.

He couldn't do anything about it anyway, except get mad, and what good did anger do?

But he wanted the human stuff. What do people think about? What do they do with their time?

They watch television

They think about what movie stars do

They think about what television stars do

what politicians do

They communicate with each other about all that stuff they communicate by machine

about where to meet for lunch

about what movies to watch

what television to watch

what news to watch

They think about what should they think about? What should they pay attention to? They should pay attention to movie stars, television stars, politicians, they should think about, and maybe some about what should they eat, how should they live to be healthy and happy.

Jeez what did people do before there was internet to tell them what to think about, what to do? Anything you want

to know about, it's online

But, just reading the headlines on the human stuff,
jeez,
sitting too much makes you die sooner,
but then,
not sitting enough
makes you die sooner.
Not enough exercise kills you,
but too much exercise kills you.

Poisons in our food. Poisons in the air we breath.
Scary. If you sleep too much, it kills you, but if you
don't sleep enough, it kills you.

He stopped reading
stuff extra to his writing, to his spiritual study and stuff.
But he got more nervous. What was happening in the
world?

What had they discovered about health, now?

How soon would hate in all its forms bring an end to the
world of life?

He tried again.

Wow. Fat will kill you. But if you're too skinny, that'll
kill you.

No, after all, fat isn't bad, they say. It's good for you.
Certain kinds. Aspirin every day is good for you, but then,
no, they discover aspirin can cause heart problems, stroke.
This new medicine helps hearts, but no, it's contaminated.
It kills people.

It has already killed people.

Don't breathe through your mouth, they say, one health
place online.

Breathe through your nose. That's what it was designed
for. You got a lot of pollution in the air, and your nose hairs
and mucous and stuff filters pollution out of the air, some
of it,

but your mouth doesn't.

Gosh that makes sense, you take the time to think about
it

Only trouble is, his nose is plugged up right now

He can't breathe through his nose. Lot of times, you
can't see pollution. Maybe his air looks clean, but who

really knows what's in it

so small

you can't even see it?

He tries breathing through his nose again and almost passes out. His nose is still plugged up most of the way, and he just can't get enough air that way.

What if he passes out while he's breathing through his nose? Will he go on trying to breathe through his nose and die from suffocation?

What do they say about that online?

He can't find anything about it

How about when he's asleep? Will he start breathing through his mouth and maybe pollution he can't even see or smell will kill him?

What about water? His water looks clean, but how much stuff in there you can't see or taste?

He gets a plastic water-filter pitcher they advertise online, cleans out even stuff you can't see, they say.

Then he finds another place says don't drink from plastic. Plastic gets into the water, and you drink it, but you shouldn't. It'll kill you. The water filter is plastic. What about radioactivity,

just for one thing?

You can't see radioactivity or smell it or taste it or filter it out, but it sure can kill you. One place online has a bunch of graphs about radioactivity in water, and all this stuff about danger all around you and inside you

it makes him so nervous, he can't make sense of the graphs. Maybe he should stop drinking water. If you don't drink enough water, you get dehydrated. You can die from dehydration.

They had a water-drinking contest, from a radio station, and one woman drank too much water and died from that, from drinking too much water.

Geez, how do you know how to live? What did people do before the internet came along, just die all over the place from not knowing enough? Geez, it says, this one article online, people a long time ago used to die much sooner,

and he thinks, "Geez, maybe from not having the internet to guide them."

He left more and more of his spiritual study behind.
He didn't have time for it anymore.
He didn't have attention for it anymore
intention for it anymore.

He got shaky nervous, just turning his tablet on or off.
He needed to calm down. They say nervousness can cause
heart attacks, strokes, kill you

Maybe a doctor could see if he needed to be fixed
or advise him what to do, or reassure him
tell him if he needed to be fixed

He shook

He had trouble
getting his key into his car's
ignition place
the little slot for it
but he got it in
started the engine
zoomed backward out of his driveway
heard nothing

caught in fear

right in front of the garbage truck.

The garbage truck driver
didn't have time
to even touch the brake
to stop

Garbage trucks
smash cars
kill drivers
did both.