

Floating

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As I float down the river, I think of how life begins and how it ends...

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As I float down the river, I have to wonder. What is death. Is it a physical power? A silly myth made up to scare the children? Most people will say it's when we leave our body, the splitting of the Body, soul, and mind. Well, here I am. I'm floating. Maybe a body, maybe a soul. Who could know? I sure as hell didn't. I thought about how easy it was to get here.

A gun to the head.

Knife in the back.

One too many pills.

And the oh so popular oldness. It's like, Here. For being so damn old, living through things no one should have perceived, let alone experienced. For hanging on and slowly Moving up, we'll tear you apart. For enriching the world as we know it, you get a grand prize

Death.

The thing that most people fear. It's an ending to them. The ultimate fear. How can we *know* that there's something else. Something better. We can't. We don't get postcards after the funerals saying how amazing it is. The euphoria, the joy and bliss. This kind of thing isn't perceivable in human nature. In our world, there's happiness. Maybe false, maybe true, It's always sought after. Next to no one will turn down an opportunity for fun. Let alone for someone else.

And the thing about these moments of happiness is that they too are mortal. They are always followed by sadness. Sickness. Death. The end. And always, that uncertainty creeps up on you, making you regret how you spent your time. You second guess every choice, decision. Every breath.

But for all those people there's some that see death as a joke. Some that know it's all just a blessing waiting to happen. Yes it's sad. Yes it's painful. But in the end, it's the best thing to happen to you. Well, Hopefully. There's always the chance of your fears coming true. Of you missing the boat.

But that's the thing. Here, I don't need a boat. I'm floating, drifting. Thinking. As I think, I realize. More and more I realize that Life seems to be forever. You never really see the end until it's too late. We mock those who seem at peace with death. Those who seem to laugh at the fear the grips us. The scars that rake apart our hearts, our souls, our very being. The scars caused when some other damaged soul swerves into your lane on the road, taking a son and friend. A brother and son. Sweeping him away forever. And even though we know that he's happy. Scratch that. There isn't an English word to describe where he is or how he's feeling. And even when we know this for sure, those doubts creep back. They threaten to drag us back under the waters. Trying to make us think we can't swim, that all things must end. Even though we know that there's a whole other life waiting. Calling. And when we think of this, we realize that yes, sometimes we have to swim. But other times, in the tough times, we just need to float. Get our breath back. Then when we're ready, we can paddle back to shore. See. Now we're in a boat. Sometimes when we need to float, there's a ship ready to tow us back. Pull us, assist us. Sometimes carry us. Friends, teachers, family. All these people are boats. Even a stranger with a kind word can help us float sometimes. Well, those are more like the arm floaties that we used to wear.

And then there's our fellow swimmers. Sometimes when we are swimming, floating, even when we're cruising on a boat, we see another swimmer. Sometimes we just pass them by with a cold glance. But What we should do in those situations is remember all those that've helped us. The kind soul that give us a ride on their boats. All those that have taken us in, for however long. Warmed you when you were cold. Fed you when hungry. Sometimes going hungry themselves. We have to remember what that did to us. Gave us that happiness we search for. Made us think about the fact might be worth it with people

like this in our world. They made us into the same kind of people. We smile as we put out a hand and pull them aboard. Or as we put an arm around their shoulder and haul them into shore. As we build a fire to warm them and start cooking enough for one on an empty stomach, we start to realize that maybe death doesn't have to be an ending. Maybe it can be another beginning. Maybe all those old people who endured for all that time just needed a chance to leave forever. To forget their aches and pains. To simply be happy.

As I float down the river, as I think of these things, I realize that more than ever, I'm ready for a new beginning. I take a deep breath and dive. Down into all the things that would seek to destroy me. Then I begin swimming again. Up this time. As I break the surface, this awesome sense of amazement comes over me. The river is left far behind me as I take one last journey into all that is right. And this happiness doesn't have a flipside. This happiness is eternal. This happiness is indescribable. Trust me. You'll hear from me again.

I'm praying for it.