

# *Avatar*

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*To Richard Greenfield*

*You always need one more light positively to identify another. Imagine it quite dark and then one point of light appears; you would be quite unable to place it, since no spatial relation can be made out in the dark. Only when one more light appears can you fix the place of the first, in relation to it.*

*Søren Kierkegaard*

they were my friends for a great number of years they were my greatest friends they floated alongside me to keep me company they were the first great friends I made here I would awaken from sleep I would awaken after a night of sleep or after a day of sleep I would awaken to find my tears still floating at my side I would be overjoyed upon awakening having opened my eyes to find

thousands of tears thousands of old friends still faithfully floating alongside no matter how lonely no matter how tormented I might later suggest to have felt during this period no matter were I later to suggest having experienced only terrible loneliness throughout the duration of this period I would not have been correct in so saying I would not have been correct because I had my tears in so saying I would have failed to remember my tears for they remained with me all the while all the while during this period which if I remember correctly overlapped with another period a period during which I concentrated my efforts exclusively upon the nature of space the nature of empty space to be precise my thinking of which was of course reflected in the subject of our conversations our conversations being one way

conversations conversations proceeding from me in the direction of my tears never from my tears in the direction of me tears being unable to speak this first period by which I mean that very lengthy period a great number of years before my ducts went dry a period which included so many one way conversations one way conversations between me and my tears this first period having coincided with a second period a period during which I focused my thoughts exclusively on the nature of empty space or so it is called it is called empty space however I still feel confident I still feel relatively confident when I say when I think to say that the empty space may in fact not be entirely empty it was during this coincidence of periods a period of my tears floating faithfully by my side and a period of concentrating my efforts

exclusively upon the nature of the so called empty space when I would time and again attempt and fail to recall what it was I had forgotten with respect to the fact of the so called empty space between the stars not actually being empty the black space the apparent uniform blackness between the stars in fact not actually being empty the coincidence or the overlapping of two periods before my ducts went dry a very great number of years that great number of years during which I would repeatedly attempt and fail to recall what it was I had forgotten with respect to the existence of so many stars of so very many stars such that every point at which I look in the so called empty space between the stars there should in fact be another star at that very point very far away so that if it were not for this something or other this something



or other notwithstanding this something or other the nature of which I had forgotten the nature of which I continue to forget this something or other between me and all the distant stars if not for the singular phenomenon of this particular something or other then the empty space would at all times appear entirely white entirely bright with stars entirely bright with starlight there being so many stars so very many stars that every point at which I look in the blackness somewhere along my line of sight somewhere within the great depths of darkness there should be a star at that precise point very far away the so called empty or black space between the stars appearing empty or black on account of this something or other being there to prevent the starlight from reaching me the forgotten nature of

this something or other being perhaps similar to the nature of a shield a shield of some sort standing between us a shield to block the light from all those millions all those billions of distant stars these something or others standing between us these shields of which I used to know something but have since forgotten everything or nearly everything of course not everything not entirely everything for I do remember one thing I still remember at least one thing I still remember the existence of the something or others I still remember that these something or others do in fact simply exist it is only their nature I have forgotten their specific character the specific character of their shielding nature therefore it may be that I will again remember their specific character so long as I continue to remember that they do simply

exist I must not under any circumstance allow myself to forget that they do in fact exist I must never forget that there are many more stars than just these two one night or one day while I am sleeping while I am concentrating my efforts upon the star in front of me the nature of the existence of the something or others might suddenly be revealed might suddenly be reawakened within me and in that case I will then feel first hand confidence or first hand relative confidence in saying or in thinking of saying that because of the specific nature because of the specific character of the shields recently reawakened within me which specific character I will then proceed to describe in detail because of this specific character the light from all those billions of distant stars is not making it to my eyes therefore I mistakenly perceive

the empty space to be black instead of white I mistakenly perceive a blackness which has absolutely nothing at all to do with emptiness but simply with the fact that I am looking at the backs of all the shields the backs of all the something or others and were I able to somehow glimpse the fronts of the shields the fronts of the something or others I would find that the front of each shield gleams like a star and I would in that case feel first hand confidence first hand relative confidence instead of the second hand relative confidence I now feel because I have forgotten I have simply forgotten a detail like having forgotten the name of something without having forgotten the existence of the something itself so I still feel even now some degree some slight degree of second hand relative confidence when saying when thinking of

saying that there was a time in the past when I felt first hand relative confidence in my certain or in my relatively certain knowledge of the nature of the existence of the something or others likewise I still feel some slight degree of second hand relative confidence in saying or in thinking of saying that where I am now is at a distant location a very distant location perhaps an extremely distant location from where I was before before I arrived here I am able to say this to think this with relative confidence because where I am now I see two stars looking around in every direction I see only two yet I know there are more or I must at least assume there are because of the confidence the first hand relative confidence I remember having once felt when saying or thinking or when thinking of saying that there is something or

other between my eyes and all the distant stars I can therefore still feel some degree of confidence although only a very slight degree of second hand relative confidence in remembering that I once felt great confidence great first hand relative confidence in saying or in thinking in thinking of saying that the so called empty space is not so empty after all therefore it is entirely possible perhaps even entirely likely that I am in the same general place the same general world as I was before before I came here before I arrived here because where I was before on the roof I could see thousands of stars where I am now only two where I was before I could see thousands of stars from atop the roof from atop my roof or perhaps not from atop my roof perhaps not from atop mine but rather from atop my parents from

atop my parents roof if I remember correctly I could see thousands of stars from atop my parents roof yet I am no longer confident or even relatively confident that I know what I mean by the word roof when I say or think to say from atop the roof for it has been a long while a very long while since I have been in contact with a roof the thing the word roof points at likewise a very long while since I have been inside what is it called or walked up a staircase quite a long while since I have walked up a staircase what I would now give for a staircase a flight of stairs to come upon a flight of stairs a little staircase it would not necessarily have to lead anywhere only a few steps carpeted steps a carpeted staircase floating by I would lay my head on a step fall asleep and dream about stairs about carpeted stairs a carpeted staircase only a

few steps what I would give but what I mean to say I know or what I mean to say I know with relative confidence is that where I was before I could see many stars where I am now only two therefore I must be very far very distant from where I was before but not necessarily out of reach of where I was before I can say or I can think to say with relative confidence that beyond the so called empty space may be those same stars those many thousands of stars from before from the roof but I cannot see them because of the presence of the something or others the nature of which I have entirely forgotten or nearly entirely forgotten which nature I can only suspect is related to something about light something about starlight not being light exactly if I remember correctly turning back now to measure something about light



about starlight being something more like sand  
quarter of a fingernail or perhaps about light about  
starlight being composed not of light not of starlight  
or not exactly of light turning back but of something  
else which may be similar to that something of which  
sand is composed still a quarter of a fingernail as well  
or anything else for that matter or for that matter that  
something or other of which anything else is  
composed or anything else composed of matter for  
that matter something about light about the  
composition of starlight being similar to the manner  
in which a beach may be said to be composed of sand  
a beach of sand a beach of light a beach of starlight a  
beach of sand what I would give for sand to stumble  
upon a couple grains floating by what I would give  
for some grains of sand to come upon some sand from

a beach sand from an ocean I had for a great number of years forgotten the ocean and upon remembering it upon remembering the ocean it became a difficult a very difficult very painful subject there are others like time others like time like the ocean like baseball cards time the ocean baseball cards and of course pinecones the word pinecone to be precise but the ocean is one of the most very difficult one of the most very painful despite the fact that I was never a sailor never a fisherman despite my never having lived near an ocean if I remember correctly in fact I may have only seen the ocean once only one time but at least one time I am sure of it I am sure because I can think of it I can think not only of the word but of what the word means what the word points at the ocean and what a great effect the ocean had on me

what a tremendous effect the one time I saw it of course I do not know which ocean I do not remember which specific ocean it was I was very young at the time this was long before I came here long before I arrived here I can no longer name the oceans such a long while since I have been in contact with an ocean atlantis something the atlantis or the titanic the titanic and the atlantis and the antarctic oceans furthermore at one time I knew the capitals of all the states the united states of atlantis now I can name only one tucson I do not know I do not remember however which state it belongs to I used to imagine I used to pretend that instead of floating in the empty space in the so called empty space between my stars I remember pretending to be floating in the ocean imagining or pretending or pretending to imagine

coming across something floating by something anything a bottle a bottle floating in the empty space floating in the ocean a bottle with a piece of paper rolled up inside I would open the bottle reach inside to retrieve the rolled up piece of paper and I still after all these years I still remember exactly what the words said the exact words written on the piece of paper when I unrolled it do not lose hope were the words keep on going or something to that effect the words were do not lose hope or do not worry things are going to be okay I remember pretending or imagining or imagining pretending coming across something anything to come across anything a bottle with a rolled up piece of paper inside anything at all just something that would let me know something to give me a second wind go for the gold something to

lift my spirits if only for a moment keep your chin up  
just keep on floating keep on floating toward your  
star the one in front quarter of a fingernail I wished  
for something like this quite often at first shortly  
after I arrived that period those many years an  
extremely great number of years during which I  
constantly asked myself questions concerning the  
nature of my arrival concerning the reason concerning  
the true reason for my arrival or the true nature the  
true character of my arrival which period immediately  
followed that very long period during which I  
contemplated the nature of the so called empty space  
that great number of years during which I conversed  
with my tears a period after my ducts went dry  
during which I constantly asked myself questions  
concerning the nature of my arrival questions such as

how did I arrive here questions such as why did I arrive here such as why did I arrive here in this place with only two stars a period consumed by questions which seemed to me at the time the most important the most vital questions how did I arrive here why did I arrive here how did I suddenly go from where I was before go from the place in which I had been the place in which I had sat upon my parents roof counting thousands upon thousands of stars questions such as how did I suddenly go from there to here such as to here where I can see only two stars one in front one behind both a quarter of a fingernail exactly why did this happen how could this have happened questions such as what could I have possibly done to get myself in this terrible situation such as what could I have done to allow for this to happen such as to

deserve for this to happen I would ask such questions all day long or all night long I would ask them over and over I asked them all throughout this period following the period during which I conversed with my tears I asked my questions a thousand perhaps ten thousand perhaps a million or even ten or even a hundred million or a hundred billion times I asked these questions questions such as how did I arrive here why did I arrive here I asked my questions over and over again so very many times I asked them so very many times until my questions no longer seemed to me like questions but seemed instead like statements after asking myself these questions for so long day after day night after night year after year after asking them so very many times without providing a single answer in reply to a single of my questions it was then

perhaps that my questions no longer seemed to me like questions but rather like statements or more specifically seemed like statements of questions more specifically like the simple stating of a question the answer to which is not possible is not available or rather like the simple stating of a question the answer to which is itself the simple stating of the question or rather is itself the next simple stating of the question which is not to say the answer is a simple restating of the question or not to say the answer is already provided in the question in the manner of those questions which are statements only insofar as the question being stated is not intended to be answered but stated only to suggest how obvious the answer is no that is not at all how my questions seemed to me like statements of questions but rather the questions



which had become statements of questions seemed to have somehow lost their ability to be questions the questions had become content to accept that no reply would be given and thus become content to shed their questioning nature to instead accept themselves as statements simply as statements without any hope without any need of a reply other than the next statement of the same question which is not to say that my statements of my questions were hopeless or needless in the negative sense but only that my questions were no longer simply my questions but instead simply my statements of my questions statements that did not expect that did not need or did not hope for a reply therefore no need or hope could be upset when no reply came other than of course my next statement of my next question so my

questions rather my statements of my questions remained hopeless only in the positive sense which is to say my questions had become positively hopeless my positively hopeless questions had become positively hopeless statements and I was saddened I was greatly saddened by my questions having become positively hopeless statements for I had grown so used to my questions being simply positively hopeless questions having been so for such a great number of years and I grieved the absence of their positively hopeless questioning nature once they became positively hopeless statements of positively hopeless questions for they were all I had at the time this period having followed that period that great number of years during which my tears floated by my side having followed the abrupt disappearance of my tears

the great act of abandonment committed against me by my tears my great old friends gone and my questions my positively hopeless questions had during this period become my only friends my very best friends following the disappearance of my tears following their abandonment of me following my ducts going dry and my inability to cry myself more friends to cry myself more tears I had known my positively hopeless questions as questions for so long and to suddenly accept them as positively hopeless statements was extremely difficult very painful at first as I mourned as I grieved the loss of their questioning nature as I mourned the loss of my old friends I say of my questions I think to say of my questions they were good friends they were good companions likewise I think to say of my sneakers of

my air jordans they are my friends my companions likewise of my stars and my tears likewise of my fingernails and my arms likewise of my legs and so on I say they are good friends good companions but in so saying or in so thinking of so saying I do not mean to think to say that my tears or my air jordans or my stars my fingernails or my arms my legs my stars or my strands of hair I do not mean to suggest that they are my friends in the same manner that I had friends before where I was before I arrived here when I was atop the roof of my parents what is it called I do not mean to say I do not mean to think to say that I am the friend of my arm for example but I only mean to think to say that my arm is indeed my friend to think to say that the friendship between me and my arm only proceeds one way only in one

direction and if my arm could hear me and if I were to ask my arm to proceed to name its very dearest friends and if my arm could speak more than likely my arm would not proceed to count me among its very dearest friends however if my arm could hear and also speak then perhaps our friendship would not be one way but would in that case in the case of my arm being able to hear and speak in that case our friendship would be reciprocal a reciprocal friendship a friendship proceeding both ways perhaps in that case a true friendship however the fact remains that my arm cannot hear and it cannot speak therefore my arm is not my friend in the true sense of the word friend the word friend and the word friendship suggesting a certain amount of effort on the part of both parties involved I say or I think or I think to say

that my arm my legs my sneakers my stars my fingernails my strands of hair my tears and so on I think to say that they cannot be my friends in the same manner that I think to say I had friends on the roof because the friendship in this case in the case of my arms and in the case of my sneakers these friendships proceed in only one direction therefore my arm may be my friend to me yet I am not the friend of my arm my arm from its perspective would more than likely not count me among its friends and although I think to say this I cannot remember having had any friends on my roof not on my roof not on my roof rather on my parents roof nevertheless I am confident or I am relatively confident in my understanding of the meaning of the word friendship relatively confident in my understanding of the

efforts or the terms required of a true friendship by which I mean that certain amount of effort required on the part of both parties involved in a friendship therefore my sneakers my arms my legs my stars my fingernails my strands of hair my tears and so on cannot be considered my friends in the true sense of the word the true meaning of the word friendship yet I nevertheless consider them my friends I nevertheless consider them my good friends despite the absence of that amount of effort said to be required of them in order to make our friendship a true friendship a reciprocal friendship I am willing to excuse my legs and my arms this required amount of effort I still call them my friends despite this absence of required effort if only because I want them to be my friends and I have no choice but to embrace my air jordans

my arms my legs my tears my stars my strands of hair  
and so on as my friends because if I do not excuse  
them this effort if I do not consider them my friends  
then what else must I consider them but my enemies  
my absolute enemies or at the very least strangers  
they would in that case be either absolute enemies or  
absolute strangers to me and this I could not tolerate  
I simply could not tolerate considering my arms and  
my legs absolute enemies or absolute strangers for  
how could I live comfortably in such proximity to  
absolute enemies such proximity to absolute strangers  
I would much prefer to simply excuse my arms and  
my legs and my air jordans excuse them that lack of  
effort required of true friendship so as not to have to  
live in what would be such intolerable proximity to  
absolute enemies or to absolute strangers however I



might consider not excusing my tears and my strands of hair if only because they turned against me they turned against me when they disappeared so in that case in the case of my tears and my strands of hair there was not only the absence of required effort but also something less than an absence of effort there was an act of absolute abandonment committed by my tears a terrible act of absolute abandonment committed by my strands of hair absolute abandonment being the one act a friend must not commit under any circumstance the one act a friend must not commit if that friend is in the least way concerned with maintaining a friendship one cannot commit an act of absolute abandonment an act of mysterious abandonment against a friend and expect things to one day simply return to normal therefore

it cannot be said it cannot truthfully be said of either my tears or my strands of hair it cannot be said that they are or ever were my friends that they were ever truly my friends instead I must consider my tears and my strands of hair my absolute enemies my very worst enemies or at the very least absolute strangers and what I once perceived as a true friendship suffered an act of absolute abandonment on their part which revealed that friendship to be a false friendship false from the very beginning never a true friendship at all however I must say I must think to say I must remember or I must admit that although there is no chance no chance at all of resuming a friendship or even of resuming an acquaintance between us I still must say must think to say I still must admit that I miss them I must admit that I miss them terribly I

miss them so very much I miss my tears and my strands of hair despite their behavior despite these despicable acts of absolute abandonment and I pray perhaps not pray but wish I wish there was something I could do something I could say something I could think to say to make them come back to me to encourage my tears and my strands of hair to come back to make them want to come back to me something I could think to say some gesture on my part that would convince them to come back to continue floating by my side to continue floating in front of my face in the case of my strands of hair and continue floating alongside me in the case of my tears to come back not simply for a while not simply for a year or a number of years or a great number of years or even an extremely great number of years but

for them to come back for all time for them to truly want to come back for all time not come back because they feel an obligation not because they feel sorry for me in my grief in my terrible grief over these despicable acts of absolute abandonment on their part but because they want to because they truly and deeply desire to return to my side for all time because they would very much enjoy doing so because they would tremendously enjoy doing so however I do not know what that thing would be that thing to say to think to say the one gesture I could make all I can think to say is please to say please come back to think to say to them to my tears my strands of hair to say that the gesture on their part to come back to me to return to floating alongside me for all time this would be an act of such graciousness and I would be