



Cristo  
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# EastBYWest

**A**cross India's Great Thar Desert and its worn footpath, reaching back for centuries like a rainbow on the cover of a children's book, a young wandering Jew makes his way into the future. It would not have been an uncommon sight some two thousand years ago. His people perfected trade and shaped the world they lived in for thousands of years. Sharing what they knew about commerce and civilization along that path, they reinvented the wheel and turned a phrase into history. It was also a well-traveled path for the Chinese, crossing from the Pacific to the Mediterranean Sea and spreading everything from silk to the plague along the way. It was there where East meets West, and all the great teachings run their course from Buddhism to Judaism to Hinduism and beyond. Where lives were changed and influences married all who lived, guided by passing caravans and warring tribes.

Cristo, as he would come to be known, had already walked across Mesopotamia and Persia by foot on a mission of his own to shed his past and find his father, a Roman centurion, who indulged himself upon a young Jewish girl on his way to war. This was the beginning of an adventure that would spread itself over three

lifetimes, through the Roman Empire, across the ocean seas, and into the next world. Cristo had no choice. Haunting dreams and ideas from above drove him. It was that drive that gave him life. It was that or simply be put out to pasture via heaven's gate, more common the fate for a man on foot. He would tell later that he was crossing a stage made infamous by a thousand actors before. That he was playing a part meant to advance the story, that his role was meaningless without the perception of eternity. A tale that should and would be shared by as many people as there are stars in the sky, whether sailing around the world or sacrificing one life to live for the eternal boundless skies of heaven and earth. That was the quest he was on, for tomorrow is there for everyone and everything that exists. Such wisdom frees the soul, saves lives, and makes masters of us all. Not to mention good health and boundless fortune that comes with broad minds and lofty notions meant to increase life's experience in this or the next world.

In the beginning, Cristo's story would be a lonely and desolate one. Later, it would spread to billions and billions as a shared experience recalled by all, covering thousands of years, millions of miles, around and around these countless worlds and retold more than any other tale. It would be played out by as many different actors as there are worlds in a seamless history that colors our thoughts and determines our actions throughout time and history. Judged to be the greatest story ever told, it saves and delivers the multitudes from the harshness of life. How the death on a cross turns a reviled symbol

of crucifixion into a cherished icon with no equal and promises a returning sequel for the most anticipated event known to man is the gist of this story.

In his mind, Cristo was looking for something innate, haunting, and familiar—the id that brings one to the table each day, looking for a chance, an opportunity to fulfill a calling heard over and over again in the minds of all seekers wandering through the deserts and jungles of the mind. How this reoccurring series, this never-ending tale, would manifest itself on battlefields and cemeteries littered by souls, each with its own dying prayer on its chapped lips, fighting to understand the incomprehensible, all disappearing in time and space, only to be recycled until no longer useful by the authors of war and peace jealous of the truth. It was through these ages that man would tumble in and out of the killing, only to be forgotten as futile debate waged by those wanting a mainstream beyond the spiritual needs of the few. The Roman soldiers, killing machines, the conquistadors, killing machines, and the born-again Christian soldiers, killing machines, were all part of the cycle of life and death called the Common Era. All were part of the yin and yang that builds then tears down the great cities and worlds around them.

The atmosphere was set. The world was on the march. Wheels turned at a horse's trot over the roads that chariots made, like the Appian Way, at two miles an hour until the hi-tech M1A1 Abrams traveled at fifty miles an hour over the same cobblestones while making believers of us all. Not just the willingness



to kill, but to die for Romans, countrymen, and apple pies united a sense of power that built the meaning of civilized progress. One could build a world around a dedicated army armed with the latest weaponry as they were reinventing the machinery to conquer those that sprang up from the ground looking for a chance. Cristo was tired of the crucifixions lining the roads and of the legions that rolled through towns like Bethlehem, having their way with the women and plundering what little wealth people had accumulated along the way.

Whether it is war or peace, Cristo was pushing at truth back and forth in his own little way. It was in his name. He would make a difference through hundreds of rumors that would change through reformations and time itself. Interrupted constantly, Cristo's world, according to him, was like that Tennessee Williams' quote: "he is the long delayed but always expected something that we live for." There was no explaining what drove such a youth, and there was no excuse for the thousands left dying on the shoulders of roads that led to nowhere and at the same time built to reach a bridge too far. This young man's mind knew where he was going, but could only guess the end game or conclusion in a sort of fractured flicker of visions. Just press on, away from the suffering and starving world he had left behind. Signs in the desert marked the way as the shifting sands covered his tracks and erased those that came before him. He was on his own, making his way into the unknown.

Now that we all are afforded total recall and the

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web's range demonstrates an advent in hindsight, this story will be made as clear as a bell rung a thousand times a day before our own eyes. History doesn't just repeat itself, it beats into us the everyday lessons that only nightfall extinguishes. We awake day in and day out with tasks that dangle like carrots before us. Are we not determined to feed on these promises of deliverance and heal our wounds, or do we simply tip another drink to a job well done?—while forgetting others left on the side of the road, as if to know there is a place at the end of the line where we're only hoping they'll fall back into place. Anything less would derail the planet and cause it to crash into another. There is no arguing that we are greatly anticipating progress every day, or we wouldn't be here at all. And it is a fact that we all see the same sun in the morning, so mightn't it be assumed that they, our great-great-grandfathers, saw and revered the same light? And isn't it expected of us to share the same notions of hunger, desire, and satisfaction that those travelers on the Silk Road traded for profit when they were about?

What Cristo found along the trade routes to Asia was no different than those found today. Hunger for knowledge, hunger for gold, or hunger for power doesn't change our appetite or fill our pockets, because it's never enough. It is our parasites that determine the bottom line, as always. Our baggage, our scars, and our vision cloud how far we can see. This life or the next or the next or the last life or the one before that can only be glimpsed in the wake of a stream of consciousness

longer than most can bear to read, to study, or to listen to. Whether it is Gregorian chants or ancient sutras, it is our habits that determine our sight and the length of our lifetime on this or any other world. So to say to you, this vessel before you reads mostly against the wind, and it comes about as predicted, all the way to the steps of the Vatican, returning the promise of two thousand years to its rightful finish.

It was an idea that infected the blood of Rome, just as it was its fate to rule the world and inherit a dream that everyone was swayed by. Whether in the mind of one man or a million men, it was universal and karmic. It was written just as it is now, a whisper, a thought, spread like a plague from person to person, drawn by a void that precedes it. As that sea that invades earth's shallows or man's wanton nature, it covers the lands before the skies turn bright, before the old can surrender, before the young can know. It doesn't start with one man or any man, but with all men and women, as it is life itself ever expanding and reaching out to the sun. As if coming from the earth and reaching the mind all at once, whether in ancient Rome or Hollywood, it claims its ground and holds fast against the rains of doubt in our own resistance.

Cristo's advent was more of a flight from evil than anything else, two thousand years ago, when a little-known character disrobed his lineage and shed the lost years between India and the Middle East. Before that, this lost soul walked to what he could not read, to hear of an alternative to the book himself. First stopping among

the Hindus, who threatened to kill him for touching the untouchables, he then took shelter with a dying branch of Siddhartha, where he studied the master disciple for a dozen years. It was from that platform that he called himself Cristo and started a campaign of struggle through the next three lifetimes.

Condemned by his own people, Cristo's voyage was wrecked on the shores of Galilee before it had a chance to blossom. But the seed was planted, and the fruit would be fed upon by billions of thirsty slaves. From the catacombs of Rome to the backwaters of Britannia, the multitudes would digest the sweet taste of freedom and the notion that they could be free of fear and death. It was a lesson learned while on the road to salvation that Cristo gave up everything to glimpse an eternity of lifetimes after lifetimes. The cause left him starstruck and dazed, bringing over his pallor a glaze that colored away his past. He would glide in orbit around men and women like a fairytale encounter with the heavens.

The madness that was Cristo's would plague these arguments for eons to come. Had it not been for Judas, the launch upon the cross would not have catapulted this insanity upon the known world. And it might have ended in oblivion, a wandering Jew's desperate attempt to escape the tentacles of his mother's faith. Fleeing this lifetime of suffering and misery was the driving force behind Cristo's design. He was determined to change the course of mankind to the note of being shunned by Siddhartha's followers for daring to inhabit an ego among eunuchs and arhats. To him it was no wonder

the limp wrist of India's population would never climb Mount Sagamatha or cross the ocean sea. He would change all that or die trying.

It was Cristo's conviction that mosquito bites, hunger, and beatings are a fact of life, but they should never stand in one's way of seeking the higher ground or diving beneath the waters of anguish and misery. Once the herbs and poisons shared their meaning of an out-of-body experience, nothing should stand between you and your sword. Nothing should delay your response time, short of a blink before the inevitable decapitation. It was his witness of thousands of deaths in wars or games that churned his ideas forward like water. People were recyclable. A notion would be demonstrated by the birth of a child with one arm or one leg, having lost the limb in a battle in the last life. Or a child born with a gift for music, studied by him in another world. How else could one explain away a child's fortune to be born to wealth, while others were subject to poverty? By begrudging one's life, we'll never learn to fly to the next perch or between this life and the next world.

Clinging to this world can only lead to the swamps, to the mindless appeasement found in the nest. Jump, as you must fill your wings with flight. Fling yourself out of the grip of terror and charge the enemy that keeps you tired and broken. Like Mark Twain said about smoking: "Quitting is easy; I've done it a thousand times."

Life is that way; if at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Every day is as a lifetime: You wake, you grow hungry, you decline, and then you sleep again. A

lifetime of birth, growth, decline, and death is always followed by another birth, growth, and so on.

Whether a warrior or a priest, a sailor or a CEO, we can't escape the cycle of life and death unless we ignore it and divert our attention toward mindless decay or nearsighted avarice. Whatever they throw before you, to offer your attention toward less lofty notions can only exhaust what knowledge you have left. For knowledge is as limited as the books we've read, while wisdom comes from soaring above the clouds. Our own stupidity convinces us we cannot fly, and one life to live is too short a time to hesitate, or we'll be run over by the train, that light at the end of the tunnel. I dare say to those that stood before us, "Step aside, I've done this a thousand times." Jump for all you're worth and don't stop jumping or you'll rest your bones in an orchard of headstones decrying, "He was a good father, left us with nothing."

Speaking about that light at the end of the tunnel, it's not always another train coming. No, sometimes it's daylight at the end of the tunnel, that long tunnel of human revolution that pains us to see the grind in our everyday life without the joy of knowing that you can fly, that you can live again and again through whatever they throw at you. Nothing really hurts in the end. I mean, they can only kill you, and then you come back again, which brings them down. It makes a scolding seem painless when taken with the cure. How else can the tortured keep a secret or the screaming monkey reach for the next branch? Only through the optimism

of the next life can we heal ourselves of the doubt that plagues our bones and causes us to cower before the cliffs of life.

It wasn't the mindless violence on TV or the topic of cancer in the publishing world that drove the likes of Cristo to seek outside the box in India, then or now. It was the shrinking returns, the forgetfulness laden with numbnuts, a conservatism that promised huge returns for the one percent. It was the simple difference between the rich and poor that Cristo felt growing up. Not just a generation off to Vietnam, but a life among the Roman rulers that measured life in the sands of time. By simply tying lifetimes together, one could make a living as a statue, a mountain, or a river. Take your pick, as there are not enough pickers to go around. Most had to be brought in across the borders illegally, so as to not upset the cattle on this side of the fence. "Drug 'em, fatten 'em up, then slaughter 'em." That was our motto back at the ranch, and it still works here. But it doesn't work for those who stir in the night, unable to sleep, with one eye on the end of the tunnel. Have you ever seen a cowcatcher in motion? Not a pretty sight if you're riding the rail. They tend to split in half, with one half catching the hobo asleep on the undercarriage, while the other half slicks the tracks, where ground meat mixes with bone and hair.

Sarcasm is the true meaning of life's thrills. An "A" person in Roman times would line up all the crosses while the "T" person knocked them down with sarcasm. How many times have you heard the number-two thief

on the wrong side of Cristo's crucifixion say, "Son of God?" while the good thief surrenders his life to the likes of Cristo muttering; "If they only knew..." Life after death is demonstrated on stage in great theater, not in the hallways of discontent. When backstabbing Caesar, it's important to know who your friends are. You see, sarcasm makes the world go around. You use enough of it to grease the wheels and you can get a tank to run over anything and anyone. It starts with an offhanded joke, like, "I wonder what his wife is wearing tonight?" And ends with, "He's got to go!"

Vonnegut taught us that nothing is sacred, not the Buddha, not Cristo, not the CEO of your wife's company. Not even Aunt Jemima can withstand *true sarcasm*.

What is true sarcasm? It shatters myths, brings down governments, and dismisses all forms of the value system. What brings it on? Time. Just as tragedy plus time equals comedy, true sarcasm is a rash of market slides in a bear market. It is a saint's whisper when being fed to the lions, and maybe with time it's *God's Word*. It wasn't Cristo's words that brought him to the cross; it was his homelessness and constantly deferring to Mary Magdalene when the food bill came due. "Baskets of fish and loaves of bread, he wants now."

Mary did have a little money left over from the stoning, but she was hoping to save it for old age, then, "It's the Last Supper! I've had it!"

So you see how it works, get the other half involved. Like the wars in Babylon, get the opposition party in power, and it becomes their war. Hallelujah! With



Cristo, it was get out of India before he was fed to the cobras. He had altered the chants just enough to put himself into the equation, suggesting that he could sell it if they made it sing. As it was, one note did not make a symphony, and too many notes made it a jingle.

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