

Not As Close – Franklin D., 09/01/2025.

The eldritch god observed him with his sharp, diamond eyes. A lampshade flashes by his side. Smoke from a cigarette comes out of his mouth. The dried tree besides him inquired him:

– When are we gonna start? There’s been quite a long time now, and nothing else seems to be in place.

– Soon – he replied – as soon as possible.

The lampshade looked from under its cover, it was foggy outside. “Might rain”, it thought. And the eldritch god observed once more with his sharp, diamond eyes. He was still sitting in his armchair. The fog was covering the entire room like a white wool curtain. There was nothing more to lose, for nothing else was in place anymore. The tree spoke softly:

– He’s observing, the eldritch god. He’s still there, can’t you see him? Most of the time he observes but doesn’t manipulate, though sometimes he does manipulate. I’m suspicious that we’re his puppets. Look at the rope and look up.

The man observed the room once more. No ropes in sight, nor an eldritch god, though he felt watched in some sense. Down the north aisle came the television, rolling, squeaking, playing games on its screen and feeling self-pitying about its decayed state of being. The man observed the room and felt an itch in his hand. “Did someone pull?”, he thought.

– Not as close – said the television – not as close as you may think – and it moved closer, colors switching fast on its screen – the eldritch god is the watcher, the one who waits and oversees the fabric of what you call home. Your home. Reality, if you find that term more suitable for what we’re aiming at here. He’s watching, observing every and each detail, he’s lurking in the shadows, manipulating strings, manipulating puppets, and hiding itself through prestidigitation, going faster, then slower, tasting the moment that comes. But it is not as close as you may think, or as you may be capable of thinking. It is not as close.

The tree was now becoming a lamp post. Evolution it might be. And the former tree, now a lamp post, pondered to itself on how such things could be. How cruel and twisted it was and how swiftly it was coming. At least his suspicion was now confirmed. They were his puppets. But the eldritch god was not everlasting, nor was he almighty. He was a pawn, a figurehead playing with which was below him, but being played by which was above him. Suddenly the

fear was no more, and the lampshade flashed, and thought to itself “not as close, they say, but it definitely does not seem as far”.

The man smoked from the cigarette once more and let the smoke run free through the air and the fog that covered the room in a wool-like curtain. And the eldritch god frowned. They had figured it out. There definitely was something above him. He himself was a puppet. But who was the puppeteer? Another eldritch god? Definitely not. He met the others at the bar and they were as busy as him observing and manipulating their rooms. But then... Who? And that question resonated through his pale skin and black eyes and bald head, causing a shiver. That was too much, surely too much.

And the man smoked once again, letting the smoke run free, and dance vividly through the air, causing a lasting impression on the former tree now lamp post and in the television whose colors, now pale in shade, still flashed swiftly. A hole opened on the ground, hands came off of it, calling the eldritch god’s name, who shall not be pronounced. The man shrunk. That was definitely not expected. Not as close. And the television, now a radio, asked the lampshade what time it was, for there were no more colors, but the announcer lost its watch.

– It’s time you buy a fucking watch – answered the lamp post, for it did not have a watch nor it knew how to tell the time.

And the time leaned itself closer, to watch and pray. “It was not as close, but look at it, it’s about time”, it thought. Was it the time who was above the eldritch god, manipulating him? He, the time, refused to answer, for it was an unanswered question. But the time knew there was someone above the eldritch god, and the time could see it, for the time was outside itself, but all living and dead were inside it. And there was nothing that could be done about it. Still leaning itself, time almost fell, making a hole on the fabric, through which the ceiling could be seen. And in the ceiling, there it was, the eldritch god, observing, manipulating and lurking in the shadows, but not as close. Not as close.

And the lamp post shrieked. There was not a single soul to be seen there. Not even the smoking (who was still smoking if that matters somehow) man. He was alive, sure, but he had not a soul. And with the lamp post shriek the lampshade fell to the glass floor and through the glass floor, shattering it in a million pieces. And the falling lampshade bled, and cried, and called for help, but it was not as close. And the eldritch god observed, and time was sorry, or was it time to be sorry? Not a single soul in the room, not a single glass on the floor and the lampshade was nowhere to be seen. It fell to its demise.

And the man smoked once more, sure his cigarette is endless, there is no such thing as time when it comes to cigarettes. And as the man smoked, he overlooked the room, and saw sadness, and grieve. And looking above he noticed the hole in the fabric caused by time. And through the hole there was him, the eldritch god. The one who demands worship even though it is a pawn, a mere figurehead. And upon that vision the man had a seizure, for what he was seeing was incomprehensible to his eyes and mind. And amidst his seizure he noticed. The strings. The itch in his hands. The tree, now on fire and screaming in agony, was right. His hands itched with the violent pulls coming from the eldritch god to make him seize. And the man realized: he could be free. It was not as close, but he had to cut the strings. The fog got thicker. Cut the strings it is, he had to, now. But the eldritch god would not allow such impertinence, not for a moment. And the ones above observed and manipulated, for they themselves could not allow such things to happen. And there it was, the man, the fiery tree, the television, time, the ones above and the eldritch god. And it was not as close as you may think. Not as close.