

ARCHIVES OF FUDGEMORE



**The Archives of Fudgemore**

A History of Truth Seekers

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## Obifus and the Pumpkin

In which Obifus must come up with a good lie, if there is such a thing.

The sun was setting as it always does at a certain time, and Obifus the liar sat on the floor with a pumpkin on his head. He must come up with a plan, a plan to save two cultures from conflict. The two cultures involved were those of his own folk and those of the pointy hats and bindings folk. And how was Obifus involved? Oh, that is another story which we don't have time to tell right now. Like Obifus and the pumpkin, we need to pay attention and not get distracted. You see, that was the purpose of the pumpkin on his head. In an effort to ensure that he would think without distraction or daydreaming, he had hollowed out the pumpkin, filled it with water and placed it on his head. And thus, he sat in deep contemplation. This technique has since been used by contemplatives everywhere from Tagnishit to Bolombara, and has even been used to come up with new potato proshuka recipes, but lets not get distracted.

At the time we are speaking of, Obifus was in the land of pointy hats and bindings. And owing to a bunch of lies he told, he was thought to be a local, even though he was from "over there". The mayor of the town of the pointy hats and bindings, a certain very red faced gentleman, had that aspect which many leaders throughout the world share, namely a fear and dislike of "others". Had it not been for his proficiency in lying, the credit which must be given to a certain Del Samara, Obifus would never have survived a night "over here". He was from "over there". To put it simply, the people of the pointy hats and bindings, and especially the red-faced mayor had a fear and hatred of people from where Obifus came. And this hatred was well founded on ignorance as all hatred is, but lets not get distracted.

The important point is, that Obifus the liar, became an imposter in the land of pointy hats and bindings and in a short time became aware of a plot being hatched by the mayor, to invade, conquer and civilize the people from over there. And this mayor thought that a miserable war was needed in order to avert the discomfort of having to get along with people who did not share his exact outlook on the world, and specifically did not wear pointy hats and bindings. Conflict you see is an inevitable consequence of an imbalance between the force of Judgement and the force of Acceptance, but let's not get distracted.

"What is needed is a good lie" said Obifus to the pumpkin, "and we must think of one quickly, before such conflict comes to pass as is inevitable among the self righteous".

Now you are probably thinking "how can there be such a thing as a good lie?". It's a good question, but lets not get distracted.

In a state of concentrated attention his thoughts went something like this: " Conflict arises from fear. Fear arises from ignorance. Ignorance arises from belief. Belief arises from the need to interpret the world in order to survive. Interpretation is based on the best we can know, and of what we cannot know, what we imagine. Therefore, in order to conquer the cause of conflict

we need to challenge what we think we know and even more so what we imagine to be the truth. To challenge what we think we know, we must feel secure. To feel secure we need to have the feeling that there is no threat. Therefore, I must tell a lie which allows both parties to feel that there is no threat, and yet to challenge what they think they know.” In one clear moment of insight this entire chain of causality appeared as one singular thought and in a moment of excited clarity he jumped up. The job of the pumpkin being complete, the pumpkin thought of no better idea than to up-end itself and pour out its slimy contents and plant its self onto the head of Obifus so that sensory input became suddenly obscure. “From insight to no sight” he thought “there is no escape from the laws of nature.” And he mumbled and bumbled, jumped and bumped, flailed and railed until he was free of his present misfortune and was able to wash his face.

He put on his pointy blue hat and other respectable garb and headed straightway to the town council where a meeting was being held on the topic at hand. At the council chamber doors, he gently knocked. When the door opened he entered obsequiously, and said “I have an idea about how to win this war!” This music to the ears of the councillors reached right to the heart of their fear, and therefore was eagerly entertained. “What so?” said the red faced mayor. “We are all ears, but explain why you are in a position to help?”. “I am in a position to help” replied Obifus “for the reason that I have some knowledge of these barbarians owing to the events I have described to you aforetime. Specifically, I have visited their township in a sorry state, having lost my pointy hat and bindings, and was received as a local. Thus I was able to meet their mayor and council all in a matter of a day, and I am sure that if I return in the same garb which they gave me, I might sneak my way into town and find out what they are plotting”. “Excellent, excellent” erupted the entire council. “Be off then and be certain to get us information to give us the upper hand!”. And so Obifus donned his real clothes, packed his donkey and headed home. And he was waved good bye with as much good will as he was greeted with hostility when he first arrived.

Obifus made the three-day journey to his home in but two days, knowing the urgency of his plan. His first action was to kiss his donkey and set him up with a bucket of barley, for without this good beast nothing would have been possible. And so it is that those that bear the greatest burden providing comfort and opportunities for others are often forgotten by those that do not seek the truth. And why is it that to investigate the origins of this folly can be considered a distraction?

And so without distraction, Obifus headed downtown, and though he was greeted with the usual pleasantries, he told all that he encountered that there was an urgent matter and he must speak with the mayor and the council. He even sent some few ahead of him to warn of danger and call the council to assembly. Thus, by the time he made it there, exhausted and with unwashed sandals he entered the council chamber and spoke. “My good people” he began “you have seen me grow up and have known me all these years for the consummate liar that I am, and by reason of my being such an admitted and honest liar, it is only reasonable that you

should now believe what I am to say". This was rather an unusual way to begin a speech and so full of contra-contradictions that the minds of those present could not find reason at all, let alone reason to refuse his entreaty. So he continued. "In my quest for understanding I made the three-day journey to the land of pointy hats and bindings of which we have heard but rumors. Arriving to discover that I was in peril, I told a great lie which led the locals to believe that I was more local than they were. Having privy council of none other than the mayor, I was soon to discover that these people, fearing our people, were planning a great disaster in the hopes of averting an unpleasant encounter with our people. In other words, they plan on making war. "

A collective gasp was heard in the council chamber and the mayor stood and she said "Prepare to arms fellow citizens!," at which they all cheered.

"No,no!" cried Obifus " I have concocted a good lie which can avert all danger! Please hear me out!" And he took off his dirty sandal and threatened to throw it at anyone who might disagree. One look at his sandal and they all calmed down. "Now then", he continued, " understand that the people of pointy hats and bindings have been educated to have emotional lives similar to that of the porcupine. In other words, if you stroke them the right way you not only do not suffer injury to self, but also engender reciprocal kindness. On the other hand, if you stroke them backwards, you not only suffer injury to self, but engender the most violent forms of reciprocation imaginable".

"And what is your plan?" asked one councillor.

Then Obifus continued his bafflegab. "Is it not wiser when encountering an unknown culture to try and stroke it the right way? Does this not better leave open the doors of discovery? And is it not more honest since in truth we would rather know something we did not know before than defend all the knowns we knew that we now know to be false? For even though we fear them, should we not remember the words of Del Samara who, except for a few, was a true friend to all without exception?"

"And what were those words pray tell?"

"That one should act the part of kindness even when we do not feel that way inside, and that we should do so for the sake of others in spite of ourselves".

"Could we please stop getting distracted and get to the plan!" shouted another councillor.

"My plan is this. I shall concoct another lie and arrange that they believe our town to be looking forward to their visit. We for our part must prepare ourselves as though we really are. In other words, prepare festivities to welcome them and praise them for their superior ways, so that their quills be stroked the right way."

And this plan being the only plan, was the plan that was planned for and Obifus kissed his donkey and prepared for the return journey to the land of pointy hats and bindings.

And how his good lies were received by the people of the pointy hats and bindings, and what followed of their encounter, and how they did indeed avert a war, well that is another story.

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# ARCHIVES OF FUDGEMORE



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The Archives of Fudgemore contain hitherto unknown tales of heroic individuals from every corner of the earth, from every age, who have, sometimes accidentally but not without struggle, discovered certain truths about the meaning of life.

They also point out that meaning transcends all cultural and racial barriers, and has the potential to heal not only an individual heart, but the heart of human societies and of humanity as a whole.

The questions of meaning and truth, we come to understand are the most important questions we can face.

Obifus and the pumpkin is part two of Obifus the Liar in which Obifus must come up with a good lie, if there is such a thing.

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## OBIFUS AND THE PUMPKIN

