The wanderings and thoughts of Kip Kellogg

by Von Doctor



Michèle Legendre /*The Brunswickan*

Kip Kellogg had trouble sleeping. Kip could never fall asleep. He'd lay there for a spell, just thinking, then Kip would get right up. He'd pull on his pants, find his dirty sneakers, and go wandering into the night. Trying to find that something, that something that would make real sense.

Kip was pretty tired, but he still couldn't sleep, so he went on his nightly wandering mission as always. Kip thought about how he couldn't sleep, and wondered if perhaps he should see a doctor about it. He did like to walk around the city at night, but it was starting to give him problems at work. His concentration was starting to slip, and he never felt very good. Kip wished he could sleep, but somehow he couldn't turn his mind off. There was always something new to think about, and that made it hard to drift off. Kip thought that maybe he was going crazy, because he recalled how he had once heard that insane people never remember their dreams, and since Kip never slept, he never had any. Maybe that was it. Maybe he was crazy and everyone else was normal. It seemed that way to Kip. He never did see anyone else wandering around all night asking questions. But he just wasn't sure, since who can say what's crazy and what's not? Who decides that something is sane and something else isn't? Kip figured that nobody can decide that, not even doctors. He didn't care what anybody said, because no one can make that decision, and if they try to, well, then maybe they're crazy themselves.

Kip made his way downtown and then finally wound up at the dump. It didn't smell very good, but Kip stayed there for a bit anyway. He looked over all the stuff that was there, like old mattresses and shopping carts. Somebody had even abandoned a car, and it had been stripped pretty well clean. It all seemed strange to Kip. At one time all that stuff was new and important to the people who owned it, but then it somehow got useless, and finally just got chucked. Kip even found a baby crib that still looked kind of sturdy, and on the side of the crib were actual pictures of the baby who had lived in it. That seemed very sad to Kip. He figured the parents would want to keep something like that. He hoped that maybe it had been thrown out by mistake, but then he guessed it wasn't likely. Maybe the parents were dead, and someone else had tossed it out. Either way it didn't matter. The nice crib was now junk. Kip looked off into the distance, at some smoke rising up from a factory. That's how things were, he figured. It was just a throw-away world.

Kip left the dump and wandered back into the middle of the city. It was pretty late, but people were still out and about. There was even a guy handing flyers to people, and Kip made sure he got one so he could see what it was all about. The flyer said:

"NEW SPACE EXHIBIT OPENING! SEE THE STARS UP CLOSE! WEDNESDAY NIGHT AT 7! ADMISSION ONLY TEN DOLLARS!"

Then it listed the address, and there were also some pictures of moons and planets and comets. Kip thought it looked interesting, but he figured he probably wouldn't go. Outer Space seemed okay, but it was too far away for Kip. It was nice to think about, but it didn't seem like a real place to him. Then Kip thought about NASA, and he decided that perhaps it wasn't worth the money. After all, billions of dollars get spent every year, and for what, really? Just space pictures, and nothing else. Kip thought that the money they used for NASA could be spent better on sick people or starving people. After all, before you try to find a new planet, shouldn't you take care of the one you have first? To Kip it seemed like building a house, and starting with the roof. But then Kip wasn't sure. Maybe he was just thinking foolishly. So he tried again to justify spending all that money on space pictures and space rockets, but he just couldn't do it. He just didn't see it. Fix Earth first, thought Kip. Then you can go conquer Mars.

Kip kept the space flyer anyway, and walked across a couple of streets. Then he made his way down a hill and into the parking lot of a supermarket. There weren't any cars left, but all the lights were still on inside. Kip walked along the building, looking through the windows at all the food. That was a big thing to most people. Food and diets and all. Kip had heard of all these new diets, where you eat only meat or only vegetables or whatever. It all seemed very silly to Kip, and he didn't understand it. Whoever heard of eating only one thing, or only eating once a week or something? Kip remembered that in school, it had always been the same: They told everyone to eat three meals a day, and to eat from all of the four food groups. That seemed right to him. That made more sense. Kip figured that as long as you didn't over-do any one thing, you could eat simple regular meals that included a little bit of everything. Then, if you exercised some, you'd feel better and not be so sick. Kip wasn't a doctor, but he figured that was the right way to go. He just didn't understand all these new weird diet plans. They seemed to go against what nature intended.

Kip backtracked a bit, and once more wound up near downtown. He was still thinking about that baby crib, and how he wished it hadn't been thrown out. Finally he decided to stop thinking, and instead went back to the dump and looked for it. He found it right where he had left it, and Kip brushed it off and cleaned it up a little. He figured he would take it home and perhaps give it to a new mother he knew in his apartment building. Maybe she wouldn't take it, but it was worth a try. He'd clean it and give it a fresh coat of paint, and put new blankets and pillows in it and all. That was a better thing to do, thought Kip. Better than letting it be destroyed. The crib wasn't very heavy, and Kip brought it back and put it in his kitchen. It was a nice project he had now, and it made him feel good that he could save a crib. He also took the baby photos that were still attached, and stuck them on his wall. Kip would probably never have any kids, but he could at least have some pictures.

And since Kip was home, he undressed and went to bed. He closed his eyes against his pillow, and tried to sleep like the rest of the world.

But sadly, Kip couldn't sleep. Like always, he was wide awake.



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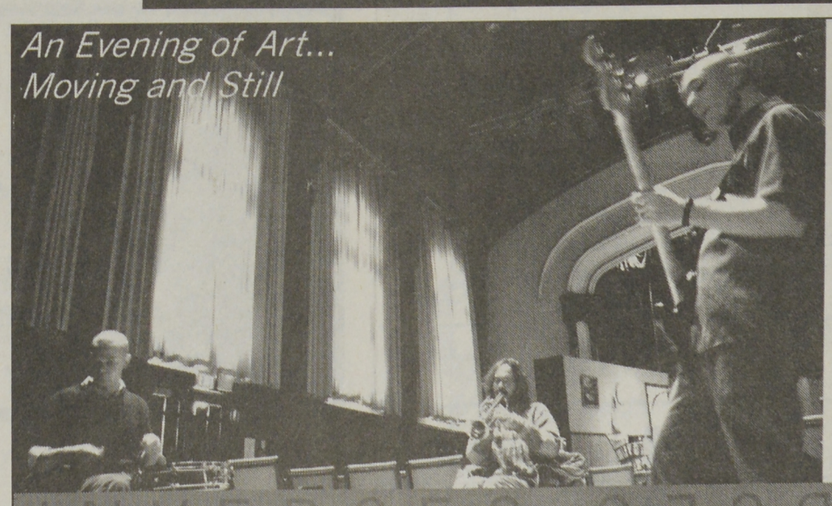
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