

## **Through the Doorway - The Great Filter**

**“Will we ever reach that point?”** You find yourself perpetually mumbling into the darkness around you, an oak desk sitting before you with strewn out paperwork littering the surface. “It just seems... So far away, yet we seem so close at the same time,” You find yourself arguing with your conflicted sense of reality, fixating on the growing darkness around you.

“Surely **hope** has not been lost, perhaps we have just become too comfortable that we stopped advancing as a race,” You flip through some notes inside of a small manifesto based around the year 2050, skimming the page as the endless illustrations flood your mind. Your ears suddenly pick up on the pitter-patter of rainfall around you as you feel beads of rain fall onto your forehead. **“The doorway seems so far off, did we really forget what made our race so faithful to ourselves? We were really forgetting how to explore, weren’t we?”** You slam down the book, disgusted by all of the luxuries possibly presented by the future.

You reach underneath your desk, into a nearby drawer with a shimmering metal handle and pull out a red box filled with matches. You are unsure of the environment around you, yet you manage to work up the courage to leave the wooden stool you had previously spent hours pondering within. You find yourself wandering forward, accidentally grazing part of your skin up against a rough patch of wood as your flickering flame highlights the cracked oak of a mighty tree standing tall against the wind.

Ah, the wind. Your face was enveloped within its cool breeze within an instant. You pulled your dim match and its flame close to avoid it being extinguished. A slow burning sensation of panic set in, you must find something to enlighten this flame... To fuel its passion just like drinking a cup of coffee would fuel your passion to remain awake and to complete the day.

Almost tripping over a large and thick stick would prompt you into losing grip of your burning match. It gently fell as the wind blew it aside. For a brief moment, you thought you had unintentionally lost your war of exploration against the void around you... Until a massive rush of air blew from beneath you and your entire body was consumed by the warmth of a dedicated flame.

Your eyes shot down at the stick you had tripped on... It was no stick, it was a torch left behind by an explorer who had come before you. You gently picked up the metal on the handle, making sure to lift it with your back as you transitioned it to your left hand. Standing in front of you, illuminated by an indomitable flame, was a great forest surrounded by nightfall.

Looking up, you saw the moon beaming bright above you, with an orange flicker matching the flame on your warming torch. You could see the leaves above you gently blowing in the breeze as their lush green texture contrasted with the orange flame you proudly wielded, a small smile had even slipped onto your face thanks to the beauty of your environment.

Behind you, your desk still stood. Would you return to a zone of comfort or would you explore the unknown? In the distance, you swore you could see something shining as if it were a door handle leading into a realm of unexplored wonders.

"Should I leave my realm of comfort to explore the darkness or continue to let it haunt me whilst I sit back down in my realm of comfort?" You almost riddled yourself out with such a mind boggling question. "To hell with it," You spitefully answer. "I have spent far too long allowing my fear to squeeze and stretch my body alongside my patience. I swear the darkness was once manageable. I will not allow this flame to die merely due to my stubbornness. My ambitions to work within comfort should not prevent me from marching into the unknown, especially when humanity was built to constantly adapt to their elements... Now I have adapted to sitting in front of a desk for most of my life whilst the thought of merely leaving my house has shaken me for far too long," You find yourself turning your back against your desk in favour of the wilderness presented ahead of you.

Your feet felt wobbly as you waded through the mud with your black and white shoes becoming ruined thanks to the nature of the mud. Ah well, some sacrifices are required if you wish to reach your destination. Soon enough, you end up confronting a stone path. Your ears are suddenly rushed with a gust of wind, a distant waterfall alongside a river can be heard rushing to the side as the moon above soon begins to radiate against the darkness of the sky; turning it a lush gold in the process as the fading blue hue blesses your eyesight.

"If it weren't for exploring, I would've never found the path... I wonder what else lies out there," The nearby chirping of the birds becomes visible as you gently step towards the door presented in front of you. The world around you begins to light up and shimmer. Your clothing (which I will allow you to make up here) glows thanks to the auspicious rays of sunlight beaming down upon you.

A mere minute prior, you felt the cold slowly creeping in on you as you huddled for warmth... Now you were being warmly welcomed into the outside world with nature's beauty comforting you. You nervously wrap your hand around the door handle as the torch you are holding suddenly melts into a backpack... That wilderness around you becomes the white-bricked wall of a house as that waterfall is merely a tap being run in the distance.

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**\*BARK BARK BARK\***

"Yes, Amber... I'm leaving for college now!" I joyously boom, my voice happy as one could be as I step foot into the outside world for the very first time.

"Have a lovely day at school, Scott!" Both of my parents coo at the same time as I feel that very same door I had confronted a minute prior gently slide shut.

"I will!" I shout despite the door being shut as I make my way down my stone pathway and onto the pavement outside of my house, where a beautiful taxi was greeting me. "Let's do this... It's time for my first day of college," I whispered to myself, gently opening the door of the taxi in the process before stepping in. I greeted the taxi driver alongside one of my soon to be fellow students, loaded up my phone and watched my worries be quelled by my optimism as I made my true destination awaited.

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**"When people measure optimism compared to pessimism with the typical 'glass half full versus half empty' riddle, people often neglect the existence of the glass itself, choosing to primarily focus on the water instead. I have been asked on multiple occasions whether or not I am someone who believes in the principle of the glass being half full or half empty. This simple question oftentimes can tell you a lot about a person, the main**

**question being answered is whether or not that individual is pessimistic or optimistic... I choose to look beyond that, I do not see half full or half empty, I merely see a glass. That is what I am thankful for, the glass that holds that water to begin with," ~ Scott "Naidvar" Bartlett - Summer of 2021 whilst getting to know some new individuals online.**