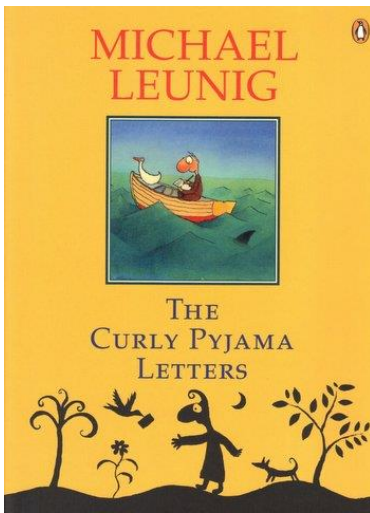


Michael Leunig: On Rest



Background: the Curly Pyjama Letters by Michael Leunig, are fragments of correspondence between the lone voyager Vasco Pyjama and his friend and mentor Mr Curly of Curly Flat.

While domestic contentment and ease with the natural world are Mr Curly's major attributes, Vasco's restless nature has compelled him into a great voyage of discovery, wandering far and wide, risking, finding, enjoying and observing much.

Theirs is a language of unique personal protocol, as is often found in conversations between creative and intelligent minds in all of life's complex grandeur, beauty and pathos.

..... in the light of all this, Curly, I ask you as I ask myself each morning, "What is worth doing and what is worth having?"

These are big questions and I am curious about your answers. I look forward to hearing from you. For the time being I have my faith and I am doing what I can.

Yours cheerfully and entirely seriously,

Vasco Pyjama xxx

Dear Vasco,

*in response to your question "What is worth doing and what is worth having?" I would like to say simply this. **It is worth doing nothing and having a rest:** in spite of all the difficulty it may cause, you must rest Vasco--otherwise you will become RESTLESS!*

I believe the world is sick with exhaustion and dying of restlessness. While it is true that periods of weariness help the spirit to grow, the prolonged, ongoing state of fatigue to which our world seems to be rapidly adapting, is ultimately soul destroying as well as Earth destroying. The ecology of evil flourishes and love cannot take root in this sad situation.

*Tiredness is one of our strongest, most noble and instructive feelings. It is an important aspect of our conscience and must be heeded, or else we will not survive. When you are tired you must **HAVE** that feeling and you must act upon it sensibly - you must rest like the trees and animals do.*

Yet tiredness has become a matter of shame! This is a dangerous development. Tiredness has become the most suppressed feeling in the world. Everywhere we see people overcoming their exhaustion and pushing on with intensity - cultivating the great mass mania which all around us is making life so hard and ugly - so cruel and meaningless - so utterly graceless, and being congratulated for overcoming it and pushing it deep down inside themselves, as if it were a virtue to do this.

And of course Vasco you know what happens when such strong and natural feelings are denied - they turn into the most powerful and bitter poisons with dreadful consequences. We live in a world of these consequences and then wonder why we are so unhappy.

So I gently urge you Vasco, do as we do in Curly Flat - learn to curl up and rest - feel your noble tiredness - learn about it and make a generous place for it in your life, and enjoyment will surely follow.

I repeat: It's worth doing nothing and having a rest.

Yours sleepily,

Mr Curly xxx