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The People We Never Heard Of Morton Marcus

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Morton Marcus

THE PEOPLE WE NEVER HEARD OF

Where did they go, the people we never heard of?

Did they build those sandstone monuments that slump in the desert or crumble in the tightening web of jungle vines?

Not the Egyptians or Mayans or the people who inhabited Angkor Wat, but the ones we never heard of, who came like a wind through the passes, fluttered into this valley or that, and were gone, leaving humps in the land, maybe a rock formation here and there, and utensils whose markings we cannot decipher.

If matter can neither be created nor destroyed, the people we never heard of are still here, just over that hill, where we can't see them, or behind our eyes, where their presence is a pressure we intuit more than understand.

I mean, do we lift a spoon, tie a knot, smile and weep as we do because those people did it first, showing us how?

A thousand years from now when this planet is a single city and the oceans are ponds in a system of municipal parks, will our descendants come across our markings for trees and whales, unable to decipher them, and sense a pressure building behind their eyes and a longing rolling through their chests for things they no longer have words for, things irrevocably gone?