

**Entry Title:** A Story About Stories

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**Entry:**

*Somewhere, there is a man on a bus made of bones travelling to a place beyond human comprehension. He has a hat; an old, tattered hat that once belonged to somebody he loved. If it had been any other hat, he would have thrown it out, but he keeps it. He needs to remember. And the bus - the bus which is only a bus by the broadest definition of 'bus' - the bus has no seats, only twisting bone spurs sticking up out of the floor in inconvenient places. Aside from the soft clattering of bone shifting, it is silent. Gaps between the bones on the walls welcome in thin trails of fog, and the door at the front hangs open like a dislocated jaw. The man with the hat closes the door. He doesn't want to let the night in.*

Imagine that bus. Imagine that man. Don't imagine the place beyond human comprehension, because we can't have everything.

*He stands silently, the only passenger. There is no driver, only a shifting darkness who has, so far, the man calculates, consumed two boxes of sharpies and a can of soup. Possibly it had also eaten the traveller who had begun the journey on the bus, but then disappeared mysteriously some amount of time ago. The man has lost track of time. He could have been on the bus for hours, days, weeks, months or years, but what does it matter? The man welcomes that small period of peace, if not safety. After what he has been through, and what he has lost, it feels almost like happiness.*

There... Do you see it? A story, tenuous as a spiderweb, but there. And it's making you feel things, isn't it? Happy, and confused, and poignant, and sad. That's what stories can do to you, that's their power. They can make you forget about the petty worries of everyday life, for a while; whether they're something you read, something you write, or something you experience. Anything can be a story. Take the one I've told you. It has only two characters: the man with the hat, who has no name, and the driver, who is possibly not sentient. Maybe even the bus- things that old sometimes gain their own personalities. Particularly buses. And yet, your brain translated the words on this page into images, emotions, memories.

*The man with the hat presses himself into a corner as more tendrils of mist begin to ooze through the walls. They smell like honey and woodsmoke, but underneath that they are dangerous, like rotten meat. He looks down at his feet, his hands, trembling. He takes off his hat and looks at that too.*

*He can't that give up. Not yet.*

And really, that is what matters. The stories that we read, the stories that we tell, and, equally important, the stories that we live. The story I've told you - that matters. The story of the man on the bus. You, whoever you are, reading this, you wouldn't have felt those feelings and made those memories without it. So yes, stories matter. Stories are, very literally, life.

*The man with the hat steps off the bus, out of the gaping door, and into the carnivorous fog. He clutches his hat tightly. The fog engulfs everything, but that is okay. It only eats what is ready to be eaten, and the man with the hat has stories yet to tell.*