

2001: All the World

All the world's not a stage,
although we're all players.
It's a game,
more like solitaire than badminton.
There is no ball, no net, no rivals.

The object is either to win or lose.
And, although winning appears to be sweeter,
many a player chooses to lose
because failing offers many a reward, too.

There are no grand entrances or exits.
We enter, play and leave.
We play no other parts other than our own,
but it can take several rounds to realize that we play only with and for ourself.
Each player has no ability to control others.
Winning at life is the result of mastering control of oneself.
The prize for losing is the same.

We may strut if we like,
but that will have little effect on our outcome.
A good player knows that we perform a one-person show.
We are our own audience and critic,
although God, mother, country and others do observe our progress.

Life is not a game of chance,
but chance is the word we often use to describe the intelligent order of the game.
The object of the game is to move through life
in such a way as to create the feeling within one's self of pure happiness.

One must move or forfeit the play.
Each move effects the next.
You can choose to move badly.
That has enormous opportunities for growth,
although you can choose not to grow as well.
Pain or suffering is the consequence of poor moves.
Happiness is the result of a game well played.
Money can't buy happiness.
Nor can the alliances we call "family" and "friends."

Each move begins with a belief.
Beliefs are tested through living.
Those moves that are founded on truth create happiness.
Truth produces happiness which is the goal of life.
And since truth produces happiness,
beliefs that are not true will produce unhappiness
and more opportunities to learn.
Although some players strategize how to win by weighing happiness against unhappiness,
the more experienced players strive for truth, not victory,

for truth leads to happiness.
Victory does not

There is a debate among the poorer, less experienced players as to what constitutes truth.
And many an amateur will try to create new rules.
But the rules are immutable.
Like gravity and dawn,
they cannot be negotiated,
although many a contender will insist that flying like a bird
makes us greater than birds
or that shutting your eyes
will undo the dawn.

Reality is a definite part of the game,
as your thumb hit by a hammer will tell you.
Still the game continues in the feelings and sensations of the mind.

I like playing at life best in the privacy of my own mind.
There, mistakes can be made and easily corrected.
Emotions are knights in the game of life.
They move in strange “L” shaped ways across the board.
And although feelings may run deep,
no feeling lasts forever.
Thoughts and feelings create consequences.
Thoughts and feelings are themselves created by beliefs.
Beliefs are guesses at the truth.
Beliefs determine the truths we will experience.
All experience is truth whether we believe it or not.

Beliefs must be tested for strength.
No building can be canopied in lead yet walled with paper.
No love can endure that hasn't borne the weight of trial.

Despite the disapproval of other players,
one can end the game at any point.
This is one way that a player can voice their disapproval.

It would be useful for every parent at the birth of a child
to declare out loud,
“Let the game of truth begin.”
Parents should remind their kids in future years
that life is a game of truth.

Teachers note:
we're all teachers.
You're teaching yourself how to play the game of life,
regardless of what you're preoccupied doing for others.

Other people's game is none of your business.
Although one can learn from good and bad examples,
the inner critic should be reserved for one's self alone.

If no one has told you this before,
be good to yourself,
your one great opponent,
your guide,
your best teacher,
the student within,
the only one you'll ever learn to love.

Let the game begin!