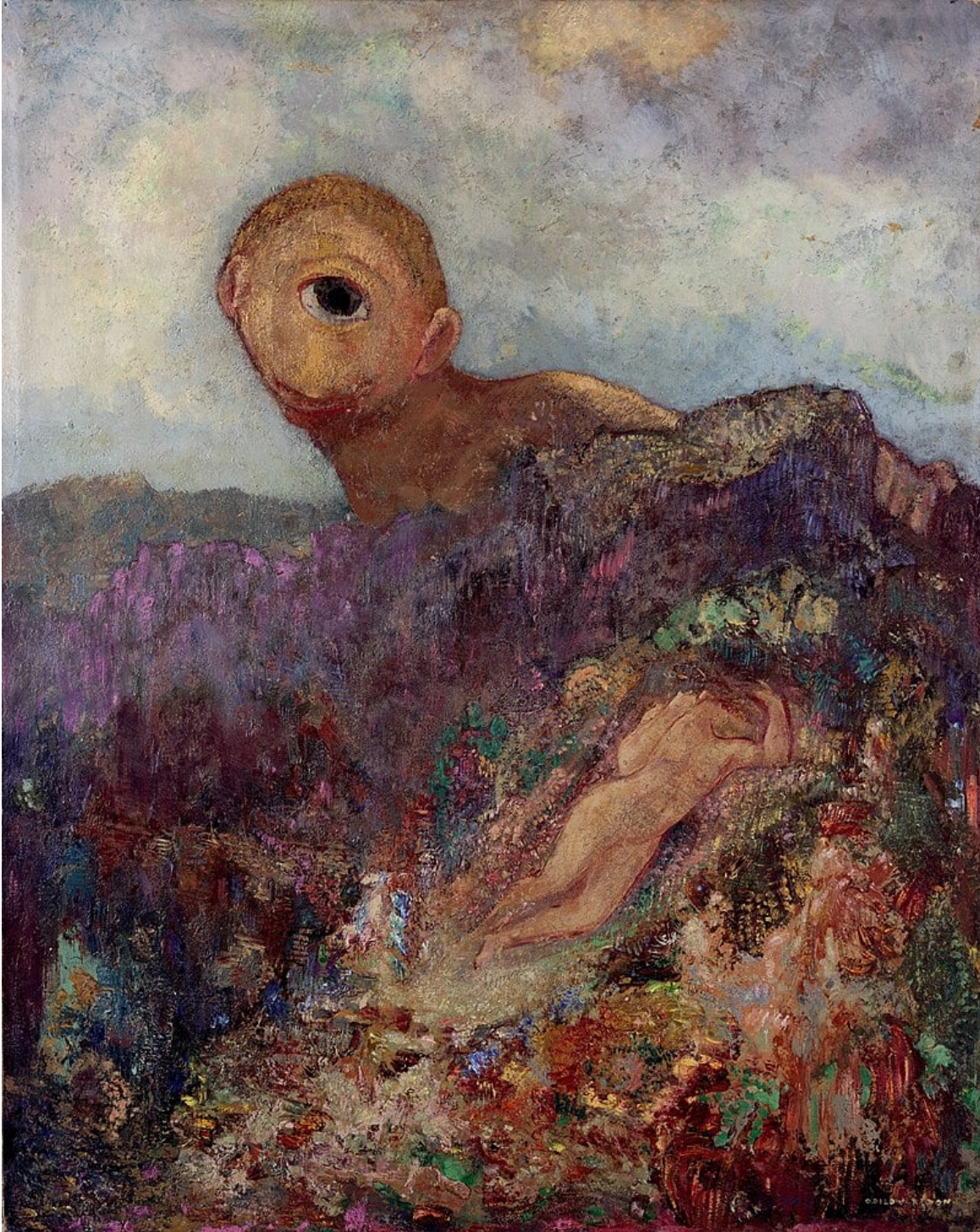


The Story of Cy Clops & More

by [Jeffrey Zable](#) (March 2025)



The Cyclops (Odilon Redon, 1914)

The Story of Cy Clops

Yes, I did know Cy Clops, who later took on a second name, Polyphemus.

How, and why, he got the second name, I have no idea.

We both went to the same elementary school in which he was picked on unmercifully because he was so different, having just one eye in the middle of his forehead. I don't remember him playing with other kids, and he almost never said a word in class.

We also went to the same junior high and had a few classes together, but after junior high we went to different high schools, so I only kept up with him through a friend of mine who lived on the same block as Cy— or Polyphemus.

I remember my friend telling me that somehow Cy had grown to gigantic proportions, but I read about it in the newspaper as well. His parents had to eventually have a special room built for him, which was like an add on to their main house.

I also learned that just around the time that Cy was to graduate from high school, both his parents were killed in an automobile accident and that Cy used his inheritance money to purchase some sheep, some specially made summer and winter clothes, a larger bed, and a few other things before transporting them

and himself to a deserted island where he went to live in a cave.

I later heard that a bunch of seafarers stopped at the island where Cy was living and that their leader—a guy named Odysseus—poked out Cy's eye and stole some or all of his sheep.

I knew that Cy had a very unhappy childhood so I wasn't surprised that he chose to get away from it all. Going to that island probably helped him to find some peace, which he otherwise may not have in a world that was mostly harsh toward him, and often is to those who are different.

Whether he's still alive I have no idea, but if he is, I wonder what he subsists on and whether it's easy for him to find his way back to his cave...

A Facebook Suicide

I knew he was disappointed that not enough of his friends were hitting the like and thumbs up button, but I had no idea that he was going to do what he did as a result of it. I mean I too have been disappointed on several occasions that friends didn't respond nearly enough to a post that was important to me—especially given the fact that I've been pretty consistent and supportive of others on my

list.

Almost always, when a friend has posted their artwork, a recipe for a dessert, a family portrait, a personal perspective on something going on in the world, or a love poem they'd written, I'd at least hit the like button.

I perfectly understand the need that most of us have to be affirmed, especially from those who are closest to us, but ending it all because not enough people were acknowledging his posts ... I just don't get it!

He did call me, and after listening to him mournfully express his disappointment and dismay with regard to how he felt misunderstood, unappreciated, and forgotten, I tried to assure him that his supporters were still there for him and that he shouldn't take it personally just because he didn't receive as many responses as he thought he deserved.

I explained that sometimes people get sidetracked with circumstances beyond their control, but that it didn't mean they weren't thinking of him and didn't care.

I added that I've always appreciated his posts but could occasionally get sidetracked myself, and to not take it personally as I've

always thought
of him as someone special and significant in my life—someone
who
was worthy of the highest praise.

To which he responded, “You’re a true friend! I always feel
renewed hope
after speaking with you!”

But then, the very next day I heard the news...

Sticking to My Story

Hello, my name is Betty Crocker and I’m going to bake you a
cake.

It will be a chocolate cake with chocolate frosting on top and
with

each and every bite you will think to yourself, “God, how I
wish

I could eat cake every day for the rest of my life and never
have

unpleasant memories that always make me sad.”

And isn’t it funny how life is filled with such joys and
sorrows,

and because the sorrows mostly outweigh the joys it makes us
want to eat sweets in the first place until nothing else
matters

because it’s the sweets that help us forget, and even though
we may wind up weighting 500 pounds it all seems worth it

because it’s better to have loved and lost a chocolate cream
puff

than never to have tasted a single jelly donut.

And even though this may not make sense at first bite,

I'm sticking to my story...

Important Things to Remember

Given that human beings haven't really been around that long, it's hard to know what they're really thinking and feeling when they say things.

You can't assume that because someone tells you they love you, that they really love you because it could only mean they love you because you just bought them a triple scoop hot fudge sundae.

Then again, you can't assume that when someone says they hate you, it means they will hate you in another minute if you agree to turn the channel to a rerun of Gilligan's Island.

All of this is very tricky stuff, and given that the human brain is still under construction, the only things we can be sure of is that you should never go to a hair stylist who wears a wig or a toupee, nor should you listen to Britney Spears if you're depressed and driving on a crowded freeway.

Most importantly, you should always know what colors to wear around gang members in your community. . .

The Monk

"The idea of the soul ... it gives me such comfort!"

he said out loud.

And when the mice came out to receive what crumbs he would give them, he shooed them away exclaiming that as he was getting less from the community, they would be getting less as well.

Which prompted the largest and most vociferous of the mice to declare, "You are a soulless monk!" before scurrying back into the wall...

The Last Time I saw Arthur Rimbaud

was at a café near the Rue Mouffetard and I remember him telling me that he was leaving for Africa to go live with a tribe of cannibal pygmies and that if I never saw him again, I'd know why.

And when I asked him why he was going all the way over there and risk his life, he raised his eyebrows and answered, "There's nothing left for me here! And besides that, I don't plan on ever writing another poem. So why shouldn't I shake up my life!?"

Which left me speechless and feeling jealous, as I pretty much felt the same, but knew I'd never be able to say something like that and actually do it at the same time...

A Little Cro-Magnon Story

I just happened to be coming out of my cave at the exact same time as my neighbor, Cria, was coming out of hers, snakeskin purse

in hand.

And without noticing me, she walked up to her husband, Fern, who was sitting against the boulder, scratching his bug bites.

Looking down at him she said, "You're not coming back into our cave until you go over to the lake and clean yourself like nobody's business.

And don't tell me again about your arch enemy, Butte, who you're worried will attack you while you're washing and most vulnerable. You just keep this between your legs."

She then reached into her purse, drew out a huge rock, and handed it down to him. "Grab for it fast, and make sure that you pound him right between the eyes with it. Make sure you got him good before you head on back!"

Standing up, and looking into his wife's eyes, I swear it could have been the first time that I've seen him smile since I've known them...

An Encounter with God

Running into him at the laundromat, I noticed that everything he was taking out of the washing machine was white, and so I asked, "Does everything you wear have to be white?" To which he answered, "White is a holy color to most people, and so I always wear it to keep up appearances."

"You mean you aren't always what you appear to be?"
I asked surprised.

“Not always!” God replied matter of factly. “There are times when I just feel overwhelmed with it all like everyone else. Days go by when a lot of innocent people suffer, die helplessly, and spout hate out of frustration. And not only that ... the stock market goes down, food prices go up, and people can’t even afford to clean their clothes at a laundromat like I’m doing now!”

“You must internalize a lot of pressure with what is going on in the world, and I have no doubt that it makes you feel hopeless at times,” I said sympathetically. “To tell you the truth, I wouldn’t want to be you under any circumstances!”

“I wish there were more people who understood and got the picture like you do!” were his final words, before putting his clothes into the dryer...

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Jeffrey Zable is a teacher, conga drummer/percussionist who plays Afro-Cuban folkloric music for dance classes and rumbas around the San Francisco Bay Area and a writer of poetry, flash-fiction, and non-fiction. He’s published five chapbooks and his writing has appeared in hundreds of literary magazines and anthologies, more recently in *The Paradox*, *Beach Chair*, *The Broken Teacup*, *Ranger*, *Hot Pot*, and many others.

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