

Lonesome Town

The following is a commentary by a resident and scientist in the government experiment, Lonesome Town.

Preliminary Description of Lonesome Town by Arthur Joyce

A town for masses of creatures, unexplainable to the common people was how they pitched this “experiment.” The government had been privy to an unnatural census. In the late 1940’s, post-WW2, the fear of spies continued. The U.S government began to dig around deep for information on possible spies. They hit scientific gold after finding the document. The whole document categorized creatures we had only heard of in storybooks.

A huge meeting took place involving every high-level government worker. The collective vote was to “relocate” the monsters to an idyllic looking town where the government could observe and test them. They named the town “Lonesome Town”. It was an ode to people working there. Most of them were particularly isolated and were considered “loners” to the outside world.

How do I know so much? I happen to be a resident there. I wish I could say they thought I was an extremely talented scientist instead of a therapy intern, yet I could not. I was caught batting for the other team. They threatened to ruin my reputation as a good

American citizen. So, I was given two choices. I could either work in the town full of strange creatures, or forever be known as the gay communist. I knew how it would impact me. I contemplated leaving the country. I thought of leaving the earth for good. Except science is my life and I refused to be pushed away from it.

I remember being briefed about the “things” we were dealing with and protocol for handling them. I knew I was surrounded by people who had also made less than American “mistakes.” The problem was you didn’t know what mistakes you made. Some people were there for loving the same gender. Others were real villains.

The commander explained each of our duties individually. I was to do “mental” checkups on the creatures we were holding. They wanted me to talk to them; it was easy enough. Many of the creatures had learned to assimilate. Almost all spoke fluent English and those who didn’t had a speech coach. The commander also handed out booklets on the types of monsters we were taking care of. Just flipping through it for the first time had me shaking with fear.

We arrived on buses in the winter of 1945. The town looked like a gated community; it had the appearance of a normal suburb. Every house was the same externally. If I hadn’t known, I’d have thought I was there to talk to women with “hysteria” rather than secret monsters.

Day to Day Life by Arthur Joyce

Every day, I would wake up at 5:00, I'd brush my teeth and comb my hair before getting into my uniform. The commander had dictated the uniform clearly. Workers were to wear a suit (or dress) under a yellow hazmat suit. At 6:00, I'd leave my suburban dream house to start my appointments.

America loves an organized neighborhood, and that was the way the suburbia prison had been. Every "street" had a different type of beast on it. Some looked more normal than others whereas some stuck out. My orders were to begin with the Banshees and continue alphabetically to Yeti.

The banshees were one of the easier species to handle. We only had two banshees; both were living in the same house. I mainly talked to Rolley, the younger of the two. She complained about sharing the house the most. Occasionally she'd have mood swings mid-conversation. We'd be talking about why she felt mad, about being with the only other banshee on earth and then she would start crying out of nowhere. Very rarely would she screech but when she did it was painful. Her scream mimicked that of a dying bird. She began with a screech and as the pain continued, her voice shook. I tried to comfort her every time, but it was to no avail. Rolley never talked about where she came from in America, but she did talk of family far away. She longed to be with them again. I wished she would tell me, but I knew I was not someone to trust for most of my patients.

After I talked to Rolley, I would talk to the Fae's. There were at least 40 fae living in Lonesome Town but I only was sent to talk to three. I truly loved visiting them because they always had cookies out. I knew I wasn't supposed to eat food touched by my patients, but they were always so good. At first, I only talked to a couple, Momo and

Sea. They complained of the tests being done on them. They hated to be separated. I tried to advocate for them to be put together if they had to be tested but I was laughed at and told: "Why let little fairies control me." After receiving a torrent of "fairy" gay jokes, I gave up. I told them to cherish the time they had together.

Sometimes I'd talk to a young fae named Coco. He didn't have his parents, and when I asked why he wasn't with his parents, he would just tense up. When I was with him, we would mostly color in coloring books. He was a great artist, as we built trust with each other, he'd give me a drawing to color at home.

By the time I reached the nymphs, I was already about to pass out. It was silly but to me they all seemed like freedom loving hippies. They wore flowy clothes and always had some kind of earthy particle in their hair, despite the lack of plants inside of the town. The Nymphs are all women, they were constantly worried about men making bad decisions around them. The government need not to worry because it seemed that none of them had any interest in men. That in fact was what they mostly talked with me

about. Many of the nymphs feared men due to hairy pasts with them. I seemed to comfort them and every time I left, I felt I had helped.

I'd visit the vampires and werewolves on opposite days so they wouldn't sense the other when we talked. On the days I talked to the vampires, we talked a lot about being more social. There were rules on interacting with other species in Lonesome Town but even the government knew they needed friends and family. The werewolves on the other hand were the opposite. I always had to persuade them to stop participating in social events too much. They paralleled a gang at times. I couldn't tell if it was a specific difference or related to something outside. I still don't know. I got home

at 9, which was later than I would be on the outside. The beauty of working late was that I could peek at the night out my window without worrying about seeming suspicious. I showered with slimy government issued soap and then went to sleep. I did those rounds every day and it became mundane to me. The novelty of therapizing monsters seemed as easy or difficult as trying to help humans.

Necessary Change by Arthur Joyce

Almost a year into the experiment, I began to feel great loneliness. The commander was particularly strict in his idea of avoiding socializing with the monsters. He explained, with veins popping out of his head, the risks of befriending the creatures we were meant to be experimenting on.

It was incredibly difficult to resist the urge to become friends with at least a few of the "beasts" in my care. They looked like me and talked like I did.

The first time I disobeyed an order was when I became friends with Mrs. Lorca. She was a sweet werewolf. She wasn't one of my patients because they tested her too frequently for me to see her.

I met her while I was waiting for my patient in the kitchen. She had just got back from testing and looked extremely ill. I rushed to help her sit, she was around my age, if not a bit younger.

She had curly brown hair and round glasses with bandages all over her hands and up into her sleeves. She looked sickly and about to wither away. Her eyes were cloudy and under her eyes were dark circles that revealed black eyes.

I remember looking at my watch to see if I had time before my patient to make her tea. It would be close, but I knew I could not just leave her like that. Rummaging through the closet, I found tea and boiled it. The whole time she sat silently. When I placed it in front of her, I seriously pondered if she had gone brain dead.

Mrs. Lorca picked up the cup of tea shakily and sipped it slowly. Just then my patient stormed in. He was living in the guest room of her house, and I knew I had to tend to him. I went over to her and whispered in her ear: "I'll talk to you later."

I helped my patient, Law, and assisted him in planning out his coping skills for when he got mad, but I wondered about how Ms. Lorca was.

When we finished our check-in, I walked downstairs to see if Mrs. Lorca was feeling better. I knew it was outside of my job and that I could get into trouble, but I couldn't leave a sick person alone.

I didn't find her at the dining table where I had left her, but I still searched. I found her sitting in the living room looking into space. I inquired about her injuries, and she cried. She explained the tests and how they felt. It left me feeling ashamed and miserable. My co-workers were torturing her with no repercussions. My work as a therapist was to help, but it felt as though this community needed more than help. It needed to stop existing.

She finished crying and asked to fix me dinner. I knew I should have said no but I still felt nervous leaving her. She cooked me dinner and explained her life before Lonesome Town. I learned of her human husband and being separated from him. I explained leaving my partner alone in the world while I left, and we bonded.

I went back many times after finishing up with my patients and I learned so much more about the lives of people in Lonesome Town. I found out about neighborhood gossip and the cruel testing. I found out about love and breakups. After spending some time with her and checking secretly with the other species living in Lonesome Town, I knew something got to change. Something had to be done.

What To Take Away

For the past 3 years the government has been hiding a secret experiment. They test humanoid creatures with chemicals and torture. They poke and prod creatures aged 2 months to 80 years in human years. The treatment is cruel and unusual. It is unconstitutional. Attached to this exposé are coordinates to the locations of Lonesome Town. There you will find individuals who have many similarities and differences to humans. They do share one true similarity and that is emotions. These creatures have experienced an idealized version of America with an add-on of extreme torture and violence. It is your American duty to save them from this endless bout of torture.

My name is Arthur Joyce, and I will reveal my big nasty secret in this document as well because I feel that after this is published you will not be able to find me. I am a gay American. Not a communist, just gay. You all will never hear from me again.

Save my friends and be compassionate.
Written March 15, 1947