

Happy Mountain Resort

By Jon Frangipane

Somehow, in my dream I am a fat man. When you're a control freak and a veggie-nut, this can be extremely disconcerting. "So, *this must be a dream*," I say to myself, as I am led out by an attendant into what is called, The Green Pasture at the Happy Mountain Resort.

Here, before my very eyes I see a herd of undulating male and female sloths, lying bare-assed in the grass, slowly turning and twisting their humongous, mucocutaneous hulks intermittently, so as to be sure to absorb even amounts of the sun's rays into their every crack, every cranny and crevice of their hopelessly sagging, bloated blobs of epidermoidal mass. And... I am one of them.

In the background I can see the most beautiful, breathtaking sight of *Happy Mountain*. What a surreal and wondrous sensation fills my loins as I slowly try to take in this marvelous scenic panorama.

However, as the sun beams warmly, in the foreground, in jaw-dropping disbelief, I am witness to a hundred glistening, slimy, monstrous mounds of protoplasmic nudity. And for no logical reason, a passage from the Bible invades my brain; "*He maketh me lie down in green pastures.*" And then that other part; "*Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.*" But strangely, there wasn't one rod I could see worth mentioning.

As I attempt to grasp the enormity of the scene, another look reveals some individuals that are not undulating. *Are a certain percentage of the lifeless ones just supposed to rot or melt in the boiling sun?*, I say to myself. *Is this Happy Mountain's version of an old elephant burial ground, only that large people come here to die, designed especially for terribly depressed, suicidal Doctor Atkins dropouts?* I ponder. *Is Happy Mountain Resort... a last resort?*

A fat woman approaches. "You're new?" she asks. "I really shouldn't be here," I answer. "I'm a man that goes to extremes to care for his body and I shouldn't be in this dream?" She looks at me from foot to head, titters and walks away.

A fat man approaches. "How's your diet going?" I ask. He looks toward the ground as many fat people do when asked that question. I'm sorry to report, that I have lost complete control of my ability to judge what, where, when and how much I should eat. If I'm not talking, I'm eating. No, no, wrong! I also eat when I'm talking. I can't see or tie my shoes. Hey, were toilet seats made for midgets? I once managed to squeeze myself into an airline lavatory, but I couldn't move. I couldn't even raise my arm to bolt the door! I am a regular here. I'm a regular here at *Happy Mountain Resort*.

A *Happy Mountain Resort* official approaches me and claims that I am lacking in certain areas of my being. He tells me that I have a terrible psychological disease brought on by lack of self-esteem, lack of confidence, lack of pride, lack of success, lack of love, lack of nookie. Nookie? *That was a strange word to use*, I thought.

I spy a particularly large whale-like object of a man lying in the grass. He is groaning as he tries to raise himself off his blanket. Suddenly, I am reminded of this reoccurring dream I have about a character in a Phillip Roth book, "*The Breast*," in which a man groans as he finds himself slowly and painfully, yet gleefully, turning into a large woman's breast. I turn my eyes away.

In moments, sitting on a rock is a small fat boy. He is eating Devil Dogs. I say, "Why are you eating Devil Dogs here in Green Pastures?"

"Because they taste good!" he replies, as he unwraps another package and hands me one. "Try it, he says." Realizing it was only a dream, I accept the Devil Dog and before I could wolf it all down an attendant comes over and snatches it away. "You know what this means!" he cries. "This is only a dream," I plead. The attendant stuffs the remaining pieces of my Devil Dog into his mouth and begins laughing, hysterically. The attendant then points to a blond figure approaching us. As she comes closer I see it's Anna Nicole Smith with a devil Dog in her mouth. The sound of the attendant's laughter becomes louder and his image begins to fade into a misty cloud, as I awaken in a pool of sweat.

There's little empathy for large people in this world. And regardless of many self-help programs, and the so-called fat clubs all over the world, members of whom are desperately trying to fight the negative image fatness brings, unhappily, we live in a world that expects a woman to be Nicole Kidman and a man to be Brad Pitt.

I could tell you about other dreams, but let me just say that this particular dream at The Happy Mountain Resort ends as an attendant signals me to follow him to another area of Green Pasture. Ahead of me, through a rising mist I think I can see Anna Nicole Smith. And I think she's eating a Twinkie. Please pray for me.

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