
WHAT REMAINS
WHEN YOU ARE GONE
Why Absence Is More Present Than Presence
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Gillettenarrative

WHAT REMAINS WHEN YOU ARE GONE

Why Absence Is More Present Than Presence

Somewhere along the way, we were convinced that to matter, you have to be there all the time.

Posting all the time.

Speaking all the time.

Showing up all the time.

Commenting all the time.

The algorithms would probably welcome you breathing all the time too, if only they could invoice it.

So, the world filled up with highly visible people.

For the first time in history, almost everyone got access to a megaphone.

And almost no one had anything to say.

The result was remarkable.

We amplified the noise until it sounded like music.

And when the noise stops, nobody misses it.

Then something happens.

Or perhaps it finally happens.

Someone disappears.

And suddenly they become impossible to ignore.

Absence has a gift that presence never will.

It forces us to think.

Do you know when you walk into a house and understand at once that someone is missing?

Nobody tells you anything.

And yet you know.

The chair.

The hallway.

The silence.

Even the air seems to have received the news.

Important things work this way.

They do not take up space.

They define it.

You never really notice a door while you walk through it.

You notice it when it is closed.

You never really notice the light while it is on.

You notice it when it goes out.

You never really notice time while it passes.

You notice it when it has passed.

The void is constantly speaking.

We are the ones who listen too late.

That is why I distrust people who want to be everywhere.

Everywhere is an interesting geography.

But a terrible strategy.

If you are everywhere, you are often nowhere.

And if you speak constantly, sooner or later you stop leaving traces.

You leave only echoes.

Many people think the opposite of oblivion is visibility.

It is not.

The opposite of oblivion is meaning.

You can be seen by millions and leave nothing behind.

Or go almost unnoticed and live on in someone's mind for decades.

Because in the end, what counts is not how many people see you.

It is how many notice that you are gone.

Silence has a better memory than the Internet.

And a much longer one.

Perhaps that is why important things do not demand attention.

They earn it.

And when they vanish, they keep speaking.

Sometimes louder than before.

The real test is not who listens to you while you speak.

It is who keeps hearing you after you have stopped.

Ferdinando