

Börkur Sigurbjörnsson

Happy ... nothing!

flash fiction



Urban Volcano

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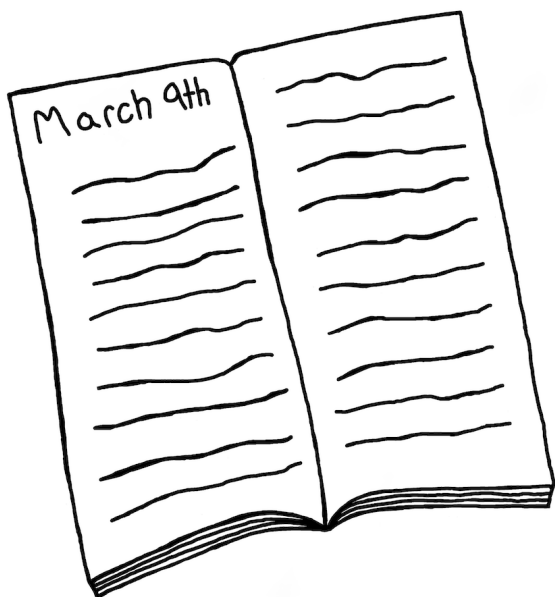
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Happy ... nothing!

Reykjavík, March 9th

Thought of Jo this morning. Facebook told me it was his birthday. Found it ideal to send him a line. We've lost contact after going our separate ways after our studies in Berlin. We who connected so well in those days. The relationship was somehow so effortless. Like it was cast in stone and all we had to do was to sit back and relax and watch it develop en flourish on its on.

He sends me birthday wishes every year. I never return the gesture when his birthday comes around. Just as I do—or don't—with other people I have gotten to know throughout life.

Sometimes I want to hear from people but I never get to get my act together and write them. What would people think if they all of a sudden received a message from me? Why is he sending me something now? After all these silent years? Wouldn't I have to explain it somehow why I was writing now but not before? Wouldn't it put some sort of moral pressure on me to keep writing? Pressure that I didn't know if I could withstand.

In the end, I decided to send Jo birthday wishes this year. I wanted to hear from him. Regardless of how it would look. Regardless of what he would think.

It made me think, though. The economic situation in his part of the world is quite unstable these days, to say the least. Would he find it distasteful if I made a reference to it along with the birthday wishes? Would he find it a sign of ignorance and lack of empathy if I didn't mention it at all?

What about news of me? Should I send some nuggets? He has hardly heard from me in three, four years. Which news should I tell? The latest? The most exciting? Was there anything in my life that was newsworthy? Would he at all be interested in news from me? Wouldn't I just be wasting a few precious minutes of his day that he could make better use of celebrating his birthday?

In the end I just wrote him simple wishes. Nothing more.
Just a happy birthday.

Now it's almost midnight. Seven hours since I sent the
message. He hasn't replied. Hasn't even opened the message.

Seems like I've messed it up. As always.

About The Author

Börkur Sigurbjörnsson is a computer scientist by training and makes his living by developing software, but writes fiction in his spare time. Börkur is born and raised in Reykjavík, Iceland, but has over the past decades lived in various cities around the world, with prolonged stays in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Burseid, Düsseldorf, London, Montevideo and Reykjavík. Börkur regularly publishes flash fiction and short stories on his website Urban Volcano.

Books By The Author

Talk To Strangers, short stories (2019)

Flash 52, flash fiction (2017)

999 Abroad, short stories (2012)

Other links

Börkur Sigurbjörnsson (homepage)

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