This story was written right after World War II by Ray Bradbury, and presented here under Article 22 of China’s Copyright Law.

“Dark They Were, and Golden-Eyed” is a science fiction short story by Ray Bradbury. It was originally published in the magazine Thrilling Wonder Stories in August 1949, under the title “The Naming of Names”. It was subsequently included in the short-story collections A Medicine for Melancholy and S is for Space. The story takes place in the near future on Mars, as is the case with many of Bradbury’s stories.

Ray Bradbury is one of my personal heroes and his writings greatly influenced me in ways that I am only just now beginning to understand.

Introduction

“There was this fence where we pressed our faces and felt the wind turn warm and held to the fence and forgot who we were or where we came from but dreamed of who we might be and where we might go…”

R is for Rocket

Ray Bradbury

For years I had amassed a well worn, and dusty collection of Ray Bradbury paperbacks that I would pick up and read for pleasure and inspiration. Later, when I left the United States, and moved to China, I had to leave my treasured books behind. Sigh.
A small collection of well worn, well read and well appreciated Ray Bradberry books. My collection looked a little something like this, only I think the books were a little more worn, and a little yellower.

It is very difficult to come across Ray Bradberry books in China. When ever I find one, I certainly snatch it up. Cost is no object when it comes to these masterpieces. At one time, I must have had five books containing this story.

I have found this version of the story “Dark they were and Golden Eyed” on the Ray Bradbury library portal in Russia, and I have copied it here exactly as found. Credit to the wonderful people at the Ray Bradbury Library for posting it where a smuck like myself can read it within China. And, of course, credit to the great master; Ray Bradbury for providing this work of art for our inspiration and pleasure.
Here is the full text of the masterpiece. I will let the reader read it and enjoy it themselves.

Dark They were, And Golden Eyed (The Naming of Names).

By Ray Bradbury

The rocket's metal cooled in the meadow winds. Its lid gave a bulging pop. From its clock interior stepped a man, a woman, and three children. The other passengers whispered away across the Martian meadow, leaving the man alone among his family.

The man felt his hair flutter and the tissues of his body draw tight as if he were standing at the centre of a vacuum. His wife, before him, trembled. The children, small seeds, might at any instant be sown to all the Martian climes. The children looked up at him. His face was cold. "What's wrong?" asked his wife. "Let's get back on the rocket." "Go back to Earth?" "Yes! Listen!"

The wind blew, whining. At any moment the Martian air might draw his soul from him, as marrow comes from a white bone.

He looked at Martian hills that time had worn with a crushing pressure of years. He saw the old cities, lost and lying like children's delicate bones among the blowing lakes of grass.

"Chin up, Harry," said his wife. "It's too late. We've come at least sixty-five million miles or more."

The children with their yellow hair hollered at the deep dome of Martian sky. There was no answer but the racing hiss of wind through the stiff grass.

He picked up the luggage in his cold hands. "Here we go," he said - a man standing on the edge of a sea, ready to wade in and be drowned.

They walked into town.

Their name was Bittering. Harry and his wife Cora; Tim, Laura, and David. They built a small white cottage and ate good breakfasts there, but the fear was never gone. It lay with Mr.Bittering and Mrs.Bittering, a third unbidden partner at every midnight talk, at every dawn awakening.

"I feel like a salt crystal," he often said, "in a mountain stream, being washed away. We don't belong here. We're Earth people. This is Mars. It was meant for Martians. For heaven's sake, Cora, let's buy tickets for home!"
But she only shook her head. "One day the atom bomb will fix Earth. Then we'll be safe here." "Safe and insane!"

Tick-took, seven o'clock sang the voice clock; time to get up. And they did.

Something made him check everything each morning - warm hearth, potted blood-geraniums - precisely as if he expected something to be amiss. The morning paper was toast-warm from the six a.m. Earth rocket. He broke its seal and tilted it at his breakfast plate. He forced himself to be convivial.

"Colonial days all over again," he declared. "Why, in another year there'll be a million Earthmen on Mars. Big cities, everything! They said we'd fail. Said the Martians would resent our invasion. But did we find any Martians? Not a living soul! Oh, we found their empty cities, but no one in them. Right?"

A river of wind submerged the house. When the windows ceased rattling, Mr.Bittering swallowed and looked at the children.

"I don't know," said David. "Maybe there're Martians around we don't see. Sometimes nights I think I hear 'em. I hear the wind. The sand hits my window. I get scared. And I see those towns way up in the mountains where the Martians lived a long ago. And I think I see things moving around those towns, Papa. And I wonder if those Martians mind us living here. I wonder if they won't do something to us for coming here."

"Nonsense!" Mr.Bittering looked out of the windows. "We're clean, decent people." He looked at his children. "All dead cities have some kind of ghosts in them. Memories, I mean." He stared at the hills. "You see a staircase and you wonder what Martians looked like climbing it. You see Martian paintings and you wonder what the painter was like. You make a little ghost in your mind, a memory. It's quite natural. Imagination."

He stopped. "You haven't been prowling up in those ruins, have you?"

"No, Papa." David looked at his shoes.

"See that you stay away from them. Pass the jam."

"Just the same," said little David, "I bet something happens."

Something happened that afternoon.

Laura stumbled through the settlement, crying. She dashed blindly on to the porch.

"Mother, Father - the war, Earth!" she sobbed. "A radio flash just came. Atom bombs hit New York! All the space rockets blown up. No more rockets to Mars, ever!"

"Oh, Harry!" The mother held on to her husband and daughter.

"Are you sure, Laura?" asked the father quietly.
Laura wept. "We're stranded on Mars, for ever and ever!"

For a long time there was only the sound of the wind in the late afternoon.

Alone, thought Bittering. Only a thousand of us here. No way back. No way. No way. Sweat poured from his face and his hands and his body; he was drenched in the hot-ness of his fear. He wanted to strike Laura, cry, "No, you're lying! The rockets will come back!" Instead, he stroked Laura's head against him and said, "The rockets will get through, some day."

"In five years maybe. It takes that long to build one. Father, Father, what will we do?"

"Go about our business, of course. Raise crops and children. Wait. Keep things going until the war ends and the rockets come again."

The two boys stepped out on to the porch. "Children," he said, sitting there, looking beyond them, "I've something to tell you." "We know," they said.

Bittering wandered into the garden to stand alone in his fear. As long as the rockets had spun a silver web across space, he had been able to accept Mars. For he had always told himself: 'Tomorrow, if I want, I can buy a ticket and go back to Earth.'

But now: the web gone, the rockets lying in jigsaw heaps of molten girder and unsnaked wire. Earth people left to the strangeness of Mars, the cinnamon dusts and wine airs, to be baked like gingerbread shapes in Martian summers, put into harvested storage by Martian winters. What would happen to him, the others? This was the moment Mars had waited for. Now it would eat them.

He got down on his knees in the flower bed, a spade in his nervous hands. Work, he thought, work and forget.

He glanced up from the garden to the Martian mountains. He thought of the proud old Martian names that had once been on those peaks. Earthmen, dropping from the sky, had gazed upon hills, rivers, Martian seas left nameless in spite of names. Once Martians had built cities, named cities; climbed mountains, named mountains; sailed seas, named seas. Mountains melted, seas drained, cities tumbled. In spite of this, the Earthmen had felt a silent guilt at putting new names to these ancient hills and valleys.

Nevertheless, man lives by symbol and label. The names were given.

Mr. Bittering felt very alone in his garden under the Martian sun, bent here, planting Earth flowers in a wild soil.

Think. Keep thinking. Different things. Keep your mind free of Earth, the atom war, the lost rockets.

He perspired. He glanced about. No one watching. He removed his tie.
Pretty bold, he thought. First your coat off, now your tie. He hung it neatly on a peach tree he had imported as a sapling from Massachusetts.

He returned to his philosophy of names and mountains. The Earthmen had changed names. Now there were Hormel Valleys, Roosevelt Seas, Ford Hills, Vanderbilt Plateaus, Rockefeller Rivers, on Mars. It wasn't right. The American settlers had shown wisdom, using old Indian prairie names: Wisconsin, Minnesota, Idaho, Ohio, Utah, Milwaukee, Waukegan, Osseo. The old names, the old meanings.

Staring at the mountains wildly he thought: 'Are you up there? All the dead ones, you Martians? Well, here we are, alone, cut off! Come down, move us out! We're helpless!'

The wind blew a shower of peach blossoms.

He put out his sun-browned hand, gave a small cry. He touched the blossoms, picked them up. He turned them, be touched them again and again. Then he shouted for his wife.

"Cora!"

She appeared at a window. He ran to her.

"Cora, these blossoms!"

She handled them.

"Do you see? They're different. They've changed! They're not peach blossoms any more!"

"Look all right to me," she said.

"They're not. They're wrong! I can't tell how. An extra petal, a leaf, something, the colour, the smell!"

The children ran out in time to see their father hurrying about the garden, pulling up radishes, onions, and carrots from their beds.

"Cora, come look!

They handled the onions, the radishes, the carrots among them.

"Do they look like carrots?"

"Yes... No." She hesitated. "I don't know."

"They're changed."

"Perhaps."

"You know they have! Onions but not onions, carrots but not carrots. Taste: the same but different. Smell: not like it used to be." He felt his heart pounding, and he was afraid. He dug his fingers into the earth. "Cora, what's happening? What is it? We've got to get away from
this." He ran across the garden. Each tree felt his touch. "The roses. The roses. They're turning green!"

And they stood looking at the green roses.

And two days later, Tim came running. "Come see the cow. I was milking her and I saw it. Come on!"

They stood in the shed and looked at their one cow.

It was growing a third horn.

And the lawn in front of their house very quietly and slowly was colouring itself, like spring violets. Seed from Earth but growing up a soft purple.

"We must get away," said Bittering. "We'll eat this stuff and then we'll change - who knows to what. I can't let it happen. There's only one thing to do. Burn this food!"

"It's not poisoned."

"But it is. Subtly, very subtly. A little bit. A very little bit. We mustn't touch it."

He looked with dismay at their house. "Even the house. The wind's done something to it. The air's burned it. The fog at night. The boards, all warped out of shape. It's not an Earthman's house any more."

"Oh, your imagination!"

He put on his coat and tie. "I'm going into town. We've got to do something now. I'll be back."

"Wait, Harry!" his wife cried.

But he was gone.

In town, on the shadowy step of the grocery store, the men sat with their hands on their knees, conversing with great leisure and ease.

Mr.Bittering wanted to fire a pistol in the air.

What are you doing, you fools! he thought. Sitting here! You've heard the news - we're stranded on this planet. Well, move! Aren't you frightened? Aren't you afraid? What are you going to do?

"Hello, Harry," said everyone.

"Look," he said to them. "You did hear the news, the other day, didn't you?"

They nodded and laughed. "Sure. Sure, Harry."

"What are you going to do about it?"
"Do, Harry, do? What can we do?"
"Build a rocket, that's what!"
"A rocket, Harry? To go back to all that trouble? Oh, Harry!"
"But you must want to go back. Have you noticed the peach blossoms, the onions, the grass?"
"Why, yes, Harry, seems we did," said one of the men.
"Doesn't it scare you?"
"Can't recall that it did much, Harry."
"Idiots!"
"Now, Harry."

Bittering wanted to cry. "You've got to work with me. If we stay here, we'll all change. The air. Don't you smell it? Something in the air. A Martian virus, maybe; some seed, or a pollen. Listen to me!"

They stared at him.

"Sam," he said to one of them.
"Yes, Harry?"
"Will you help me build a rocket?"

"Harry, I got a whole load of metal and some blueprints. You want to work in my metal shop, on a rocket, you're welcome. I'll sell you that metal for five hundred dollars. You should be able to construct a right pretty rocket if you work alone, in about thirty years."

Everyone laughed.
"Don't laugh."

Sam looked at him with quiet good humour.

"Sam," Bittering said. "Your eyes -"
"What about them, Harry?"
"Didn't they used to be grey?"
"Well, now, I don't remember."
"They were, weren't they?"
"Why do you ask, Harry?"
"Because now they're kind of yellow-coloured."
"Is that so, Harry?" Sam said, casually.

"And you're taller and thinner -"

"You might be right, Harry."

"Sam, you shouldn't have yellow eyes."

"Harry, what colour eyes have you got?" Sam said.

"My eyes? They're blue, of course."

"Here you are, Harry." Sam handed him a pocket mirror. "Take a look at yourself."

Mr. Bittering hesitated, and then raised the mirror to his face.

There were little, very dim flecks of new gold captured in the blue of his eyes.

"Now look what you've done," said Sam, a moment later. "You've broken my mirror."

Harry Bittering moved into the metal shop and began to build the rocket. Men stood in the open door and talked and joked without raising their voices. Once in a while they gave him a hand on lifting something. But mostly they just idled and watched him with their yellowing eyes.

"It's supper-time, Harry," they said.

His wife appeared with his supper in a wicker basket.

"I won't touch it," he said. "I'll eat only food from our deepfreeze. Food that came from Earth. Nothing from our garden."

His wife stood watching him. "You can't build a rocket."

"I worked in a shop once, when I was twenty. I know metal. Once I get it started, the others will help," he said, not looking at her, laying out the blueprints.

"Harry, Harry," she said, helplessly.

"We've got to get away, Cora. We've got to!"

The nights were full of wind that blew down the empty moonlit sea-meadows past the little white chess cities lying for their twelve-thousandth year in the shallows. In the Earthmen's settlement, the Bittering house shook with a feeling of change.

Lying abed, Mr. Bittering felt his bones shifted, shaped, melted like gold. His wife, lying beside him, was dark from many sunny afternoons. Dark she was, and golden, burnt almost black by the sun, sleeping, and the children metallic in their beds, and the wind roaring forlorn and changing through the old peach trees, violet grass, shaking out green
rose petals.
The fear would not be stopped. It had his throat and heart. It dripped in a wetness of the arm and the temple and the trembling palm.

A green star rose in the east.

A strange word emerged from Mr. Bittering's lips.

"Iorrt. Iorrt." He repeated it.

It was a Martian word. He knew no Martian.

In the middle of the night he arose and dialled a call through to Simpson, the archaeologist.

"Simpson, what does the word 'Iorrt' mean?"

"Why that's the old Martian word for our planet Earth. Why?"

"No special reason."

The telephone slipped from his hand.

"Hello, hello, hello, hello," it kept saying while he sat gazing out at the green star. "Bittering? Harry, are you there?"

The days were full of metal sound. He laid the frame of the rocket with the reluctant help of three indifferent men. He grew very tired in an hour or so and had to sit down.

"The altitude," laughed a man.

"Are you eating, Harry?" asked another.

"I'm eating," he said, angrily,

"From your deep-freeze?"

"Yes!"

"You're getting thinner, Harry."

"I'm not!"

"And taller."

"Liar!"

His wife took him aside a few days later. "Harry, I've used up all the food in the deep-freeze. There's nothing left. I'll have to make sandwiches using food grown on Mars."

He sat down heavily.
"You must eat," she said. "You're weak."

"Yes," he said.

He took a sandwich, opened it, looked at it, and began to nibble at it.

"And take the rest of the day off," she said. "It's hot. The children want to swim in the canals and hike. Please come along."

"I can't waste time. This is a crisis!" "Just for an hour," she urged. "A swim'll do you good." He rose, sweating. "All right, all right. Leave me alone. I'll come."

"Good for you, Harry."

The sun was hot, the day quiet. There was only an immense staring burn upon the land. They moved along the canal, the father, the mother, the racing children in their swimsuits. They stopped and ate meat sandwiches. He saw their skin baking brown. And he saw the yellow eyes of his wife and his children, their eyes that were never yellow before. A few tremblings shook him, but were carried off in waves of pleasant heat as he lay in the sun. He was too tired to be afraid.

"Cora, how long have your eyes been yellow?" She was bewildered. "Always, I guess." "They didn't change from brown in the last three months?"

She bit her lips. "No. Why do you ask?" "Nevermind." They sat there.


They leaped into the canal water, and he let himself sink down and down to the bottom like a golden statue and lie there in green silence. All was water, quiet and deep, all was peace. He felt the steady, slow current drift him easily.

If I lie here long enough, he thought, the water will work and eat away my flesh until the bones show like coral. Just my skeleton left. And then the water can build on that skeleton - green things, deep-water things, red things, yellow things. Change. Change. Slow, deep, silent change. And isn't that what it is up there!

He saw the sky submerged above him, the sun made Martian by atmosphere and time and space.

Up there, a big river, he thought, a Martian river, all of us lying deep in it, in our pebble houses, in our sunken boulder houses, like crayfish hidden, and the water washing away our old bodies and lengthening the bones -

He let himself drift up through the soft light.

Tim sat on the edge of the canal, regarding his father seriously.
"Utha," he said.

"What?" asked his father.

The boy smiled. "You know. Utha's the Martian word for 'father'."

"Where did you learn it?"

"I don't know. Around. Utha!"

"What do you want?"

The boy hesitated. "I - I want to change my name."

"Change it?"

"Yes."

His mother swam over. "What's wrong with Tim for a name?"

Tim fidgeted. "The other day you called Tim, Tim, Tim. I didn't even hear. I said to myself, That's not my name. I've a new name I want to use."

Mr. Bittering held to the side of the canal, his body cold and his heart pounding slowly. "What is this new name?" "Linnl. Isn't that a good name? Can I use it? Can I, please?"

Mr. Bittering put his hand to his head. He thought of the rocket, himself working alone, himself alone even among his family, so alone.

He heard his wife say, "Why not?" He heard himself say, "Yes, you can use it." "Yaaa!" screamed the boy. "I'm Linnl, Linnl!" Racing down the meadowlands, he danced and shouted. Mr. Bittering looked at his wife. "Why did we do that?" "I don't know," she said. "It just seemed like a good idea."

They walked into the hills. They strolled on old mosaic paths, beside still-pumping fountains. The paths were covered with a thin film of cool water all summer long. You kept your bare feet cool all the day, splashing as in a creek, wading.

They came to a small deserted Martian villa with a good view of the valley. It was on top of a hill. Blue-marble halls, large murals, a swimming-pool. It was refreshing in this hot summer-time. The Martians hadn't believed in large cities.

"How nice," said Mrs. Bittering, "if you could move up here to this villa for the summer."

"Come on," he said. "We're going back to town. There's work to be done on the rocket."

But as he worked that night, the thought of the cool bluemarble villa entered his mind. As the hours passed, the rocket seemed less important.
In the flow of days and weeks, the rocket receded and dwindled. The old fever was gone. It frightened him to think he had let it slip this way. But somehow the heat, the air, the working conditions - he heard the men murmuring on the porch of his metal shop.

"Everyone's going. You heard?"

"All right. That's right."

Bittering came out. "Going where?" He saw a couple of trucks, loaded with children and furniture, drive down the dusty street.

"Up to the villa," said the man.

"Yeah, Harry. I'm going. So is Sam. Aren't you, Sam?"

"That's right, Harry. What about you?"

"I've got work to do here."

"Work! You can finish that rocket in the autumn, when it's cooler."

He took a breath. "I got the frame all set up."

"In the autumn is better."

"Got to work," he said.

"Autumn," they reasoned. And they sounded so sensible, so right.

"Autumn would be best," he thought. "Plenty of time, then."

No! cried part of himself, deep down, put away, locked tight, suffocating. No! No! "In the autumn," he said. "Come on, Harry," they all said.

"Yes," he said, feeling his flesh melt in the hot liquid air. "Yes, the autumn. I'll begin work again then."

"I got a villa near the Tirra Canal," said someone. "You mean the Roosevelt Canal, don't you?"

"Tirra. The old Martian name."

"But on the map -"

"Forget the map. It's Tirra now. Now I found a place in the Pillan mountains -"

"You mean the Rockefeller range," said Bittering.

"I mean the Pillan mountains," said Sam.

"Yes," said Bittering, buried in the hot, swarming air. "The Pillan mountains."

Everyone worked at loading the truck in the hot, still afternoon of the next day.
Laura, Tim, and David carried packages. Or, as they preferred to be known, Ttil, Linnl, and Werr carried packages.

The furniture was abandoned in the little white cottage.

"It looked just fine in Boston," said the mother. "And here in the cottage. But up at the villa? No. We'll get it when we come back in the autumn."

Bittering himself was quiet.

"I've some ideas on furniture for the villa," he said, after a time. "Big, lazy furniture."

"What about your Encyclopedia! You're taking it along, surely?"

Mr. Bittering glanced away. "I'll come and get it next week."

They turned to their daughter. "What about your New York dresses?"

The bewildered girl stared. "Why, I don't want them any more."

They shut off the gas, the water, they locked the doors and walked away. Father peered into the truck.

"Gosh, we're not taking much," he said. "Considering all we brought to Mars, this is only a handful!"

He started the truck.

Looking at the small white cottage for a long moment, he was filled with a desire to rush to it, touch it, say goodbye to it, for he felt as if he were going away on a long journey, leaving something to which he could never quite return, never understand again.

Just then Sam and his family drove by in another truck.

"Hi, Bittering! Here we go!"

The truck swung down the ancient highway out of town. There were sixty others travelling the same direction. The town filled with a silent, heavy dust from their passage. The canal waters lay blue in the sun, and a quiet wind moved in the strange trees.

"Good-bye, town!" said Mr. Bittering.

"Good-bye, good-bye," said the family, waving to it.

They did not look back again.

Summer burned the canals dry. Summer moved like flame upon the meadows. In the empty Earth settlement, the painted houses flaked and peeled. Rubber tyres upon which children had swung in back yards hung suspended like stopped clock pendulums in the blazing air.
At the metal shop, the rocket frame began to rust.

In the quiet autumn, Mr. Bittering stood, very dark now, very golden-eyed, upon the slope above his villa, looking at the valley.

"It's time to go back," said Cora.

"Yes, but we're not going," he said, quietly. "There's nothing there any more."

"Your books," she said. "Your fine clothes."

"Your Illes and your fine ior uelr re," she said.

"The town's empty. No one's going back," he said. "There's no reason to, none at all."

The daughter wove tapestries and the sons played songs on ancient flutes and pipes, their laughter echoing in the marble villa.

Mr. Bittering gazed at the Earth settlement far away in the low valley. "Such odd, such ridiculous houses the Earth people built."

"They didn't know any better," his wife mused. "Such ugly People. I'm glad they've gone."

They both looked at each other, startled by all they had just finished saying. They laughed.

"Where did they go?" he wondered. He glanced at his wife. She was golden and slender as his daughter. She looked at him, and he seemed almost as young as their eldest son.

"I don't know," she said.

"We'll go back to town maybe next year, or the year after, or the year after that," he said, calmly. "Now - I'm warm. How about taking a swim?"

They turned their backs to the valley. Arm in arm they walked silently down a path of clear running spring water.

Five years later, a rocket fell out of the sky. It lay steaming in the valley. Men leaped out of it, shouting.

"We won the war on Earth! We're here to rescue you! Hey!"

But the American-built town of cottages, peach trees, and theatres was silent. They found a half-finished rocket frame, rusting in an empty shop.

The rocket men searched the hills. The captain established headquarters in an abandoned bar. His lieutenant came back to report.

"The town's empty, but we found native life in the hills, sir. Dark people. Yellow eyes. Martians. Very friendly. We talked a bit, not much."
They learn English fast. I'm sure our relations will be most friendly with them, sir."

"Dark, eh?" mused the captain. "How many?"

"Six, eight hundred, I'd say, living in those marble ruins in the hills, sir. Tall, healthy. Beautiful women."

"Did they tell you what became of the men and women who built this Earth settlement, Lieutenant?"

"They hadn't the foggiest notion of what happened to this town or its people."

"Strange. You think those Martians killed them?"

"They look surprisingly peaceful. Chances are a plague did this town in, sir."

"Perhaps. I suppose this is one of those mysteries we'll never solve. One of those mysteries you read about."

The captain looked at the room, the dusty windows, the blue mountains rising beyond, the canals moving in the light, and he heard the soft wind in the air. He shivered. Then, recovering, he tapped a large fresh map he had thumb-tacked to the top of an empty table.

"Lots to be done, Lieutenant." His voice droned on and quietly on as the sun sank behind the blue hills. "New settlements. Mining sites, minerals to be looked for. Bacteriological specimens taken. The work, all the work. And the old records were lost. We'll have a job of remapping to do, renaming the mountains and rivers and such. Calls for a little imagination."

"What do you think of naming those mountains the Lincoln Mountains, this canal the Washington Canal, those hills - we can name those hills for you, Lieutenant. Diplomacy. And you, for a favour, might name a town for me. Polishing the apple. And why not make this the Einstein Valley, and further over... are you listening, Lieutenant?"

The lieutenant snapped his gaze from the blue colour and the quiet mist of the hills far beyond the town.

"What? Oh, yes, sir!"
Conclusion

I do not remember when I first read this story, but I am pretty sure that I was in my early teens. Sometime around 1972 or so, I picked up a paperback without a cover and started to read it. I became enraptured with the book, and brought it home where I scarfed up every juicy morsel inside of it.

I later, cut the brown cardboard backing from a note pad and taped it to the front of the book, making an ugly, but functional cover. Carefully, I wrote the title of the work “The Martian Chronicles” using a very yellow Bic Banana pen on the cover. Under it, I printed “By Ray Bradbury”. Bookstores would often get credit for books that they could not sell. To do this, they would tear off the front covers and send them back to the publisher for credit. Behind the bookstores would be bins full of discarded paperback books. Though finding one that you would be interested in was remarkably difficult. You had to go through a couple of hundred books that could represent anything from romance novels, to Westerns, to books on the surviving the future snowball earth as a consequence of global freezing.

During the 1970’s there was a big push to fund efforts to pre-
vent global cooling. I would attend school and we would go out and clean up the neighborhood, and go on fund raising drives to collect money for the cause. The money would be collected in huge apple baskets. There was so much money collected. Baskets and baskets of donated money to prevent global cooling. Now, I don’t know what ever happened to the money. But, I am sure that someone took it and spent it in some way. Anyways, afterwards, we would eat hotdogs at a barn-fire, and sing songs. Typical songs were “If I had a hammer”, and kumbaya.

What I would do is crawl up and into the huge metal dumpster, and dig through boxes and debris to get to the books.

You could get an inkling of what the book’s content would be by looking at the back cover, but it was typically a difficult endeavor. However, for a young boy, who liked to read, climb in and out of dumpsters and get into trouble, it was like mining a treasure trove.

I would typically find four or five books of interest and throw them into my backpack / satchel (that I got at an Army Surplus store) and ride my banana-seat bicycle home. Once at the house, I could read the books at leisure, and out of the collection, I might end up keeping two or three and tossing the rest.

I was the perpetual scavenger. From lost golf balls at the local golf club to digging through the rocks at the nearby pool to look for fossils. My bedroom was a collection of all sorts of junk that I would lug home. I had everything from arrowheads to piles of “Mad Magazine”, and “Treasure Magazines” stacked up in the corner. My room had model airplanes hanging from the ceiling by string, to old maps that I liberated out of the ceiling rafters of an old car garage.

I was a typical boy, and Ray Bradberry was a major influence on my life.
Take Aways

- Ray Bradbury wrote the short story “Dark they were and golden eyed”.
- His works greatly influenced me when I was a young boy into my early teens.
- He contributed to my desire to study aerospace engineering, become a pilot in the Navy, and join MAJestic.
- His stories are not to be studied, they are to be enjoyed.

FAQ

Q: What would you do after you read science fiction stories?
A: Typically, I would read at the house. I was a big fan of reading while I was in the bathroom. I would read on both the toilet and while soaking in the tub. I would read in my tree house, or on my bed, or in the living room. I would read on the porch, or in the car while my father was driving us about. I read everywhere.

However, when I wasn’t reading I was typically out walking or hiking. We had various spur lines for the coal-hauling railroad all around us. They would wind in and out of the hills. I would walk those railroad tracks. Often I would walk on top like a balance beam. If a train was near, I would pull out a penny to squash on the track. I would also pick up some of the millions of little black marble-sized dirty balls that were everywhere and throw them into the bushes or into the nearby river. Sometimes I would take out my trusty (blue) cub-scout knife and cut some branches off of a beech tree and chew on the branches as I walked.

I often would walk alone and ponder my life. I might go with a friend or two, or my trusty dog Belle (she was a Siberian Husky). We would walk the spurs and climb the hills. We would talk about televisions shows, the local football game, and things that mattered to us.

Q: Should Ray Bradbury and his works be taught in school?
A: Yes and no. Stories by Bradbury are not something that can used to achieve grades. It is something that has to be absorbed. Therefore, I believe that everyone should be exposed to his work, but it should not be
used as a study aid. It’s like pizza. Many people like it, but not everyone. You can study how to make a pizza, but the best thing and the best utility for pizza is to eat it.

Posts Regarding Life and Contentment

Here are some other similar posts on this venue. If you enjoyed this post, you might like these posts as well. These posts tend to discuss growing up in America. Often, I like to compare my life in America with the society within communist China. As there are some really stark differences between the two.

The Fiasco of the Reengineering of the Common Tomato
This is the sad, sad story about how the wonderful and tasty tomato was reengineered to be “better”. It was made better to ship. Better to sell. Better to store. However, there was one thing missing. No one paid any attention to taste, which is why it tastes like a cardboard shipping box today.

Mad Scientist Explorations
Here we discuss what it was like growing up as a boy in the 1960’s and the 1970’s and the people, things, and adventures that inspired us. As such, we explore how the independence of growing up enabled us to cope through life when we got older.
**The Gorilla Cage in the Basement**
When I was a small boy, I used to play in the abandoned buildings nearby. Here is a story about one of the objects that lay hidden inside one of those buildings and the possible mysteries that it held. As a child we thought it was a gorilla cage, now as an adult, I am not so sure...

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**The Pleasures of Fresh Baked Bread with Butter**
One of the things that I have come to miss, since I moved to China, is fresh hard crusty rolls with full salted butter. The Chinese are not really fans of crusty bread. They like sweets and sponge cakes. Here I describe something that is close to me; not appreciating what you have right in front of you.

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**What Work was Like in the 1960’s and 1970’s.**
When people go to work today, they find that there are all kinds of rules and regulations. It is for diversity, safety, inclusion, and improvement in a new progressive world. Well, here is what work was like before it became a sterile progressive testing ground for the New World Order.

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**Learning during my 1970s High School years**
Here is a pretty long post on what it was like to go to elementary school in the 1960's, and then attend high school in the 1970's. I graduated in 1977, and that my friend is exactly the target date for the famous movie “Dazed and Confused”. Here is the real deal what it was like.
Some True Stories of Cat Heaven

Being in MAJestic taught me many things. One of which was an intimate understanding of Heaven and other “spiritual” things relative to quanta entanglements. Here I discuss what it is like to have a beloved animal (cat) dies and what actually happens to them and why.

Life Lessons from Working within the Corporate Dream – 1

After I was trained by MAJestic, I was left to fend for myself in Corporate America. It was a hellish existence. As such, I learned many lessons concerning behavior and the ultimate impact that it holds on our families, our friends, our loved ones, and our very lives. Here are my commentaries.

Life Lessons from Working within the Corporate Dream – 2

This is part two of the two part section. There is quite a lot of information to impart. Stories are told, and experiences relayed. Honestly working in corporate America in the 1980’s, through the new century really sucked. It was harsh on everyone except the owners of the companies.

How to Build Up Your Life from Nothing.

This is for all those young men who are just leaving school and trying hard to build up their life. You can do it. Here are my thoughts and advice for a young man who is encountering that most difficult of challenges; carving your life out in the wilds of the world.
Allow your Children to Play and Grow (Part 1)
I am horrified, just horrified, that parents do not allow their children to play, roam and explore on their own. It has created a society of pampered fearful children. Here I discuss this in terms of what I know. This is very non-PC and might offend the more liberal readers out there.

Allow your Children to Play and Grow (Part 2)
This is the second part of my rant about permitting children to play, explore and have fun. Everyone, the odds that some stranger will abduct your child is very small. Most people who do this are family friends and neighbors. Stop being so fearful. It harms the development of your child.

Ode to Diabolical Cretin John McCain
Well, that evil son-of-a-bitch is finally dead. If his grave wasn’t so far away, I go there and dance on top of it. This guy has spent his life backstabbing people, hurting people, concocting wars, and doing everything in his power to disrupt the lives of people. Good fucking riddance.

The Song “Baby Got Back” Translated into Latin
Here is a fun post. The song “Baby Got Back” is translated into Latin and then back again. I have to tell you that it is indeed hilarious. *Rebecca, ecce! tantae clunes isti sunt!* (Rebecca, behold! Such large buttocks she has!) Anyways, it’s just all fun and games. Enjoy.
More Posts about Life

I have broken apart some other posts. They can best be classified about ones actions as they contribute to happiness and life. They are a little different, in subtle ways.

On Being an Older Gent
Here are my thoughts on growing old as a man. The truth is that the life that I expected to have as I was growing up never materialized. Instead, something else manifested. My life today is nothing compared to what I thought it would be. For my illusions were created by American media.

Calexit and the American Civil War
This is a pretty detailed look at the causes of the American civil war, and why it wasn’t about slavery. We look at the rewriting of history by the internet, and the efforts that President Obama took to keep California intact so that the Democrats could maintain political power and control.

Why an American man should leave America and Travel
All people should get up off their duff and go forth and Travel. However, this is most especially true for American men. The United States has become a crucible of PC progressive realities that attack and depreciate American men. Go out, young man, see the world as it really is!
The Amazing Bremelanotide PT-141
Forget Viagra, and all those other ED medications. This is the real deal. This little baby causes humans to go into heat. It interacts with the brain and sets up feelings of intense arousal on both men and women. It turns people into 16 year olds. As such it is banned in the USA by the FDA.

Bronco Billy and the 25th Law of Power
Bronco Billy is a fictional movie starring Clint Eastwood. The movie depicts the life of a man who decides to change his life and go ahead and do what he has always dreamed of doing. He goes out and becomes his dream. There are lessons here for all of us, we only need listen.

The r/K Selection Theory applied to American Politics
The r/K theory is a pretty well-known theory on animal behavior. It simply states that animals behave as they need to based on the scarcity of resources. Here, we argue that it can be applied to why humans follow different political philosophies. Especially in American politics.

How they get away with it
Ten years ago, Bankers committed fraud in Wall Street that just about devastated the nation. Earlier, we had the S&L fiasco, the nightmare with penny stocks, and now the grand wholesale treason with the selling of Top Secrets to a foreign nation. This is how they get away with it.
The Line in the Sand – Now What?
It’s the same story. Just vote for us, and we will correct everything. Yet, nothing ever happens. You know, boys and girls, this old “song and dance” can only be maintained for so long. Eventually it will fractures, and people will no longer rely on elections to institute change...

The importance of having a second passport.
So President Trump is building a wall to protect Americans. Hum. Where have I heard that before? Oh yes, in Germany right when they were making the wall that separated Berlin. Walls serve two purposes; they keep people out, but they also keep people in. Be careful what you wish for.

How Rocket Scientists Build Paper Airplanes
This is a tale of what me and my classmates used to do when we were young Aerospace Engineering students at the university. We would design paper airplanes and shoot them down with bottle rockets. Here is just a fun little exercise down “memory lane”. Enjoy.

What is Snopes.com and can it be Trusted?
Snopes is a “fact check” website that is fully funded by the oligarchy. It is used to “shout down” any narratives that does not support the rich and powerful, and politically connected globally. Here we discuss the organization, who they are and what they represent.
Today America Taxes it’s Expats without Representation. This is a sad state of affairs. Americans who reside outside of the United States now have to pay American taxes, even though they have no representation in Congress. As I recall this was one of the reasons for the American cry for independence in 1776.

What life is like inside the ADC Prison in Arkansas
This post discusses what life is like in a hard labor prison in Southern Arkansas. We discuss hoe squads, food, the hole, commissary, dress, fashion, homosexual culture, prison gangs, murders, relationships and other aspects of life when you are sentenced to “Hard Time”.

The Hazing of New Employees – A Lost Tradition
Up until the 1980’s all companies would haze new employees. Today, we live in a world regulated by the government and policed by Human Resources. We forget how things used to be just a handful of decades ago. Here is my narrative when I started to work.

How to Build a Gallows and a Hangman's Noose
The United States is entering a period of strife. There will be violence. There will be discord and discomfort. It will be an ugly time. There will be winners and losers. It will be painful for the losers, and the victor will need build a gallows. This is how to do so and why it is needed.
Here are reprints in full text of stories that inspired me, but that are nearly impossible to find in China. I place them here as sort of a personal library that I can use for inspiration. The reader is welcome to come and enjoy a read or two as well.

**Here There Be Tygers by Ray Bradbury**
When I was younger I used to read science fiction stories for pleasure. They filled my minds with adventure and passion. One of my favorite authors was Ray Bradberry and here is a complete reprint of one of the stories that has influenced me to be the man that I am today. Enjoy.

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**The Long Rain (Full Text) by Ray Bradbury**
This is the full text of a most excellent science fiction story. It concerns a group of survivors from a crashed spaceship stranded on a Hellish rainy planet; the tropical cloud-covered Venus. They survive the crash, but have to battle the forces of nature and their own passions.

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**The Fog Horn (Full Text) by Ray Bradberry**
Here is a story about the emotions of being the last of your kind. This story is one that influenced me when I was a young boy in the 1970’s and continues to haunt me to this day. All of us are human. We all feel emotions and passions. They drive us to accomplish or destroy. It’s our choice.
The Rocket (Full Text) A Story by Ray Bradberry
This is a nice short story about a poor man who dreamed about flying into space. No matter how hard he worked, and no matter how much he saved, he was never able to provide for that dream. Then one day, when he was asked to scrap a test rocket, a thought came to mind...

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