

Creeping Normality

WEPRO is great! Stupendous really. In fact, WEPRO is the best thing since... since... well, WEPRO! There is just nothing good enough to compare it to. That's how great it truly is!

I turn left onto street 042. Though the walk to work is long, and the pavement beneath me unforgiving, my feet remain resilient; not the slightest ache. But why would they hurt? It wouldn't make sense if they did, not while I'm wearing the best shoes available, Walkpros.

I look around at the people and buildings that surround me. All of them are coated in some shade of purple, obviously. I mean, what else would we be wearing, green? I chuckle quietly to myself at the absurd notion, taking note of several others around me as they do the same. Green. How ludicrous!

The people I see move about in all directions. Most are heading to work, I'm sure, although some are probably out shopping. I, for one, am heading to the WEPRO Factory of Apparel, or the WEPROfa for short. Things have been pretty busy lately, on account of the onslaught of orders coming in for Walkpros. I frown for a second as the thought of going without a

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pair of those blessed shoes comes to mind. This expression is replicated by the sea of purple clad bodies that surrounds me.

It's great sharing minds, one of WEPRO's best innovations yet! How dreary it must have been Before WEPRO, or BW, when people could think only to themselves. How lonesome! I can't even begin to imagine the horror. The thought is too much for me. I let out a shudder. Of course, thanks to WEPRO, this is met with a tremor of shudders from the people around me.

I'm almost to work now, yet still so far away. It seems that way at least, ever since I got a craving for a Shakepro about three streets back. Shakepros are my favourite drink. They're the best! I think of how refreshing it will be when I wash down a tasty Burgerpro with it at lunch. My stomach growls, met by a booming cacophony of similar sounds.

WEPRO, how to describe it? Although no word is exceptional enough to portray the idea of WEPRO, I can't help but think about it. It's just so great after all! WEPRO has been in power since, well, as long as I can remember. Everything great in

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society has come to be because of them. They govern our world and have created equality throughout it. What could be better?

I scan the Flickerpros that periodically dot the sides of buildings, keeping me informed with messages from WEPRO. One of the devices begin to flash, catching my eye. In large bolded words it says: "WEPRO IS GREEN FRIENDLY! GREEN IS GREAT!!!". I roll my eyes. Of course green is great. Why would anyone question that? Looking down, I let out an audible gasp, as do those around me. Our purple clothes stand out starkly against the beautiful backdrop of green roads and buildings. In unison, we hastily adjust the colour dials at the base of our ears. We let out a unified sigh of relief as our clothes transition into our favourite colour, green. The colour changer must be on the fritz I think to myself, as blood rushes to my cheeks. How embarrassing. I can't believe I was seen in purple! What a putrid colour.

In a few minutes, the incident is far from my mind. My thoughts are instead drawn back to WEPRO, of course. WEPRO takes care of all of us. They bring us joy. Along with employment, clothes, food and product tokens, WEPRO brings happiness. They give us

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fulfillment, purpose. If it weren't for WEPRO, I don't know what would become of the world. No doubt we would be under the tyrannical rule of ORPEW. A collective shudder moves through the forest of green that surrounds me. How horrendous that would be!

ORPEW is a faction of rebels that rival our beloved WEPRO. Long ago, BW, the world became embroiled in war. Comrade turned against comrade. Family against family. Brother against brother. Weapons of mass destruction were turned from enemies to allies. All trust was lost. After the dust had settled, a pact was formed. From the ashes rose hope. From the ashes rose WEPRO. WEPRO rebuilt the world, improving upon it in every way. It formed the beautiful empire of equality that stands today.

Unfortunately, this peace was not to last. For every dreamer, for every rational thinker, there is a lunatic, an anarchist. In the case of WEPRO, this was ORPEW.

ORPEW broke the pact and fought against progress. They are malicious creatures who feed on chaos. They sought to destroy humanity's last chance at survival. Luckily, although in reality it had nothing to do with luck, WEPRO retaliated and eradicated

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these rebels from all civilized areas, forcing them into the recesses of the charred, forgotten world. It is there that the remaining forces reside, waiting, plotting. But we have nothing to fear. Why would we? WEPRO is unstoppable, it will protect us as it always has. ORPEW doesn't stand a chance.

I reach the WEPROfa, stopping to admire its beautiful architecture, its sleek frame coated in my favourite colour, red. I feel important, adorned in the same colour as this masterpiece. It's empowering.

I head inside and take my usual place along the assembly line. A quick look at the gigantic Flickerpro plastered against the far wall of the factory informs me of my quota. Today I will be producing the new Saunterpros, guaranteed to prevent all the aches and pains Walkpros inflict on our feet. Not a moment too soon, I think to myself, as I slip on a pair of my own Saunterpros. Those Walkpros were causing my feet so much pain. How I despised them! Taking a quick stroll in my Saunterpros, I feel as if I'm walking on clouds. Such comfort. So divine.

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Back at my station, I begin my shift. Shoe after shoe, I make the world a better place. More importantly, however, I aid WEPRO, my divine purpose. As I work through my shift, I make sure to keep a close eye on the Flickerpro across the room. We all do. Its messages change periodically, never telling me anything new, but I look nonetheless. As my shift reaches its halfway point, I consult the Flickerpro one last time and head off to the lunchroom. The last message was an ad for, ironically, what I am about to eat.

I sit down at a table with my tray of food. A plate of Saladpro accompanied by a glass of Milkpro. My favourite! I guess I could be considered a picky eater, because this is the only food I ever eat. But what else would I eat? A Burgerpro? Hardly. Those around me feel the same way, each eating the same dish as me. I shrug, simultaneously with the room, and continue chewing.

Back at my station, I resume my work at the assembly line. I consult the Flickerpro, slip on a pair of Walkpros, and begin the manufacturing process once more. Walkpros really are the best! Much better than the alternative, Saunterpros. Walking in

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those horrid shoes causes my feet to ache more than walking barefoot on cement would. I feel so comfortable in my Walkpros, my feet so resilient. I work steadily, allowing my mind to wander, still consulting the Flickerpro periodically of course.

WEPRO rose from nothing. It turned the hollow shell of a world into the vast metropolis it is today. Their real victory, however, is not in technological advancements. The greatest success of WEPRO came about when they synchronized the minds of their citizens. That was truly the dawn of the Yellow Age, named in commemoration of our favourite colour of course. Now we think as one, move as one, live as one. Back in the BW time, the world fell into war because of inequality. People had deluded themselves into thinking they were all equals; they believed they were the same. How foolish of them to think that such a separated group of people could ever become equal. Little did they realize that people are weak when apart, succumbing to their own selfish desires. In that time, everyone emulated the ideology behind equality, but deep down, they never really believed it. When they finally thought they had eradicated the desire to be greater than each other, that's when things took a turn for the worse. Even if the idea of being better than

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someone else is abolished, when people are separated, they will find a way to distinguish themselves. They will always want to be more equal than others. And it is because of this flaw that the world fell. It was for the best, however, for it set in motion the birth of WEPRO. The beginning of true civilization. WEPRO learned from the mistakes of the world. They took their approach at equality and revolutionized it. They saved the world.

By morphing our minds into one, they used human instinct against itself. They knew selfishness could not be eradicated, so they embraced it. Now, as one, we are selfish for society. Naturally, we still want what's best for ourselves. But what "ourselves" actually is now, is society. WEPRO tamed selfish desires, changing them into selfless acts. They brought an end to the world's oldest pursuit. I smile to myself, as do those around me. I really do love that story.

I finish my shift and exit the WEPROfa. Admiring the yellow building once more, I start the long walk back to the WEPRO Sleeping Sector, WEPROss for short. When I finally make it there, I enter the vibrantly orange building. I freshen up

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before heading to the cafeteria. Once there, I am delighted to see that they still have some of my favourite food left, Burgerpros with bottled Shakepro. I scarf my dinner down and head out to the WEPRO Market, or WEPROm, to pick up the best merchandise there is. I hate almost all of my clothes. I need to replace them with the best. I would have bought the best originally, but there must've been a shortage in stock or something, I can't quite recall. Either way, what else would explain why I bought these horrid clothes?

I begin to hustle, as do those around me, when the thought of an empty shelf enters my mind. What if I don't get the best? My worries are assuaged when I enter the WEPROm and see shelves upon shelves fully stocked with goods. Joyously, I make my rounds, purchasing the best of WEPRO's products. When I finally finish, I am adorned in comfort and style. I head back to the WEPROss, exhausted from the long day. Sinking into sleep within my Podpro, I dream of WEPRO. What a beautiful dream! I am almost sad when I wake from it, though only momentarily. The thought of assisting WEPRO again today is just as exhilarating.

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I leave the WEPROss and begin my trek to work once again. I smile at the Flickerpros above me, as do the people around me. They reassure me of my love for WEPRO and inform me of all the trends I already know.

One Flickerpro in particular catches my eye. Everyone's head swivels to face the large board. It says: ORPEW IS GREAT! SYNCHRONIZERS OF HUMANS AND DESTROYERS OF WEPRO! WE LOVE ORPEW!!!

Everyone stops suddenly, taking in the sign. We all stare blankly at it, not sure what to think. Slowly, a smile creeps over each and every one of our faces. It grows from ear to ear. Simultaneously, we begin walking again, our feet resilient while adorned in Walkpews.

I am so glad ORPEW destroyed WEPRO all that time ago. Although, I'm not quite sure how long ago it was. It must have been a while though, because ORPEW has been unrivaled for as long as I can remember.

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I smile to myself, as do those who surround me, as I turn left onto street 042.