

## Letter of Resignation to Language

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Whenever I write, I feel this aversion towards the words that appear on the page. They never say exactly what I mean for them to say. That's not their fault, though. It's a fault of my own. Or perhaps there's fault on both sides. On one hand, I am too lazy and impatient to sit here and write down thoughts that I could easily say to someone else (or just not say at all). On the other hand, language is this thing that tempts me with the belief that I can relay my ideas to another individual so well that said individual would know exactly what my thoughts were.

And so, I keep writing, keep talking, keep thinking to myself, that if I write, speak, think so many words, eventually it will make sense. But it doesn't. I've already written eight pages of words to get to these that appear on paper. You won't see those other words, but they exist. And they mean something all by themselves. Well, at least I think they mean something. They were haphazardly written, but I believe they were coherent enough to mean something.

That's why I envy words. All they have to do is exist, and they already have meaning. They don't have to wonder or worry about whether or not their existence is significant because:

- 1) They're not "self-aware" beings who are capable of wondering or worrying about their existence.
- 2) They can exist on their own, despite the fact that they can have more meaning when in context with other words.
- 3) They are ascribed meaning by us.
- 4) There were other things, but I can't remember them right now.

If it turns out that words are actually self-aware individuals who are capable of being offended by my saying they are incapable of wonder or worry, then I'll make a public apology. However, for now, they're not, so I'll continue.

Although words seem to enjoy a simpler existence, it seems we share some similarities with them. We are the creators of words who give them definition. Alternately, we create religions and other institutions in order to have a "creator" who can give us definition as well. Words, even with our definite definitions, seem to find meaning in context with other words. In the same way, we also seem to find meaning when put in context with other individuals, events, environments, etc. The only definitions we can really have are those formed in context with our surroundings.

Even when words are put in context with each other, though, like in a sentence, there's always this distance between them. Or at least there's supposed to be. There are spaces between words and punctuation marks installed to keep those words in order and by doing so, give them structure. There are spaces

between us as well, the distance created either by our contrived assertion of "individuality," or the distance created by that language that works to unite words, to unite us, but ultimately ends up keeping everything apart. We impose grammar upon our lives so that they may make sense. Rules and requirements are made in order to give significance to the things we do or don't do.

Look at us. We're a language. We wish to be in perfectly constructed sentences, but it's not possible. The syntax is always off and the wording is never quite right. It never means exactly what we'd like it to mean.

Why do we have language? We desire our lives to be structured and significant just as much as we desire something that *we* can structure and ascribe significance to. That's what language does. It controls our lives, gives us trouble, brings us to our knees, all the while leading us on to believe that we created it, brought it into being, and gave it meaning.