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"Every lie we tell incurs a debt to the truth. Sooner or later that debt is paid."

Craig Mazin: Chernobyl, TV mini-series (2019) HBO, season 1, episode 5, 52:15–52:22

The structure of truth

Lie is the antonym of truth. These two words are therefore connected in an unbreakable structure. This means that however complex a lie is, it will always be bound to the truth it distorts. This is also the case with the truth. However clear-cut and absolute a truth is, it is always bound to the lies that could have been told about it. There is a clear structure which both truths and lies abide by in which both are present within each other. Sooner or later, the truth will come to light, or a lie will be told, and their mutual debt to each other is paid. But is there a perfect lie, or a perfect truth? A lie which cannot be seen through or traced back to the truth from which it originates, or a truth so absolute that no lies could be spun from it? Or will there only come contradictions from truths and lies that result in even more debt?

Truth and lies are bound by a near perfect structure. One cannot exist without the other. Or is that really the case? There exists something called "a bullshit". A bullshit is a distortion of reality that pays no mind to the truth. In this sense, you could say that a bullshit is a perfect lie, a lie in which the truth is not present. A lie which begets no debt. But is a bullshit really a lie? I would argue that it is not. A lie is part of a structure in which both the truth and the lie are in constant pursuit of each other, always trying to bring themselves to light and leave the other behind in the dark. But that pursuit is never-ending. The lie and the truth will continue their mutual pursuit forever, so lies will always come from truths, and truths will always come from lies. A bullshit, however, pays no mind to the truth. There is no structure. The bullshit will not pursue the truth. It will simply exist as a perfect bullshit, one with no objective truth connected to it. Any bullshit is a perfect bullshit, as it is not connected to a structure that seeks to uphold a duel between two components. A bullshit is oblivious to the truth and will not participate in their duel. Therefore, a bullshit is not a lie, as a lie must actively duel the truth for supremacy.

Since a bullshit is not a lie, would this make it a truth? That is a hard question to answer. A bullshit is in many ways a delusion, a subjective truth. This means the bullshitter believes it is the truth regardless of evidence. There are many famous bullshitters, though perhaps the most famous of them is the current president of the US, Donald Trump. Fact-checkers constantly find inaccuracies in Trump's statements. In response to this, the president mutters his favourite words: "Fake news!" It is clear, in many instances, that his claims are preposterous, but that does not seem to matter to him. Donald Trump is a pioneer of post-factuality, where "fact" no longer means "truth". A fact which does not fit with your truth, your narrative, is simply "fake news". The objective truth is thrown aside in favour of the subjective one. There is now, not one absolute truth, but rather several subjective ones. "My car is red", "No, it is green", "That is fake news". It does not matter whether the car is red or not. It will be the truth to some, and fake news to others. This post-factual state of mind is a bullshit state of mind. There is no regard for the objective truth, there is simply MY subjective truth, MY delusion. However, in an absolute truth-lie structure, the truth is objective and lies are a threat which

can subvert it. This means that a bullshit cannot be a truth either, as a lie cannot affect it. A bullshit is both a truth and lie, but at the same time, it is none of them.

So then, are there really any perfect lies or perfect truths? No. The structure does not allow it. A truth will always spin lies, and a lie will always be seen through. All that matters is that the truth comes out in the end. Truth is the natural state of affairs. While the truth-lie structure needs both components to function, the truth can exist on its own. A lie derives from a truth, a truth does not derive from a lie. The key evidence to prove this is the existence of contradictions. Objective truths will never result in contradictions. There can never be conflicting truths, as there is only one objective truth. If two truths are contradicting each other, then one of them is a lie, whether intentional or not. Lies can, and will, contradict each other eventually, either due to the people telling them not being able to follow their own narrative as it gets too complex (human error), or due to the immeasurable number of lies which can stem from a truth which will result in a contradiction eventually. The monkey and typewriter theory states that if an infinite number of monkeys had a typewriter, over time, the monkeys would write an entire Shakespeare piece on the typewriter. This theory can be applied to lies as well. If an infinite amount of lies stem from a truth, then contradictions would unavoidably be created. This cannot be applied to an objective truth, because there is only one. There cannot be more than one objective truth. The truth will eventually come out, and the lies will pay their debt to the truth.

The truth-lie structure is an unbreakable structure in which both truth and lie depend on each other to continue the structure. But since a lie derives from the truth, the truth is the natural situation. There can therefore technically exist a world without lies. But what would that lead to? The concept of “opinion” would not exist, as it is not objective. There would be no discourse, no progression, just truth at a standstill. Therefore, lies, while harmful, complete the world. It brings about the truth through discourse and exchange of subjective truths. The ultimate goal is truth, though truth cannot be reached without lies. Therefore, while we by lying rack up debt to the truth, that debt is more useful than detrimental. The truth will come out eventually, and we will just have to pay our debt. It is a necessary sacrifice in order to reach the ultimate goal of truth.