

the Box

Bud Morris

6/20/93

The box is snug and warm. It is comfortable and safe. It is secure and predictable because everyone in the box sees everything in the same light. The box is definitely the place to be.

Most of the occupants of the box were born and raised there. They all have a peculiar squinting expression, as if affected by constant exposure to extremely intense light. Most of them can't remember when they didn't have the characteristic squint of the box. They are so acclimated to this perpetual squint that they are not even aware that they are squinting. Everything is beautiful in the dazzling light of the box, even though it can only be rightly appreciated through the squint of the box.

A few "Outsiders" have also come into the box. It was simple, really. Once they mastered the unique squint of the box and were thoroughly accustomed to viewing everything through it, they were welcomed into the warmth and light and companionship of the box.

The occupants of the box love it dearly. They are genuinely thankful for its beauty and comfort and security. Most of all, they are thankful for the cozy warmth of their special relationship with the box maker that can never be experienced outside the box. This relationship is fostered by the meticulous study of the box maker's instructions in the intense light of the box library. The library abounds with literature on the real meanings of the instructions.

Few occupants of the box remain totally insulated from the chill of the outside. Virtually everyone has to go out sometimes, for the business of life. Although some occasionally fail to return to the box, everyone knows that as long as they are careful to view everything outside the box through the squint of the box they will always remain loyal to the box. After all, the squint exposes the ugliness of everything outside the box just well as it reveals the beauties within it. That makes it all the nicer to return to the soothing contentment of the box when the outside tasks are done.

Outsiders generally ignore the box. They don't seem to realize their obligation to the box maker. Some even deny his existence. But many outsiders claim to love him just as much as the occupants of the box do. It is difficult to understand why they choose to remain outside the box with its brilliance and its warm relationship with the box maker. Some speak of other boxes, as if the box maker would have made several boxes. Others profess to be unable to master the squint of the box. The real problem is obviously that they just don't love the box maker enough to follow his instructions. That's sad! It is best not to associate too much with such people.

But the people that must be avoided at all costs are the ones that have forsaken the box. True, they still profess to love and serve the maker, but they presume to interpret the instructions aside from the superior light of the box library. They claim to have found glaring inconsistencies in the literature of the box. They even say that some of the traditions of the box actually contradict the maker's instructions. Don't be deceived. Their facial expressions reveal the trouble. They have abandoned the squint of the box. Frankly, some of them have dared to suggest that the squint of the box actually distorts the vision of the occupants of the box.

It is a shame to have to discuss such things, but the truth must be defended against every heresy. These wide-eyed traitors actually insist that the maker never made the box at all. They contend that it developed inadvertently from the accumulation of trash that the occupants have heaped between themselves and everyone else that loves the maker over the years. They argue that the maker is much bigger than the box, and depreciate any special relationship between him and the occupants of the box. They claim that the exceptional warmth of the box results purely from the insulation of the box, or it would not be limited to the box. They maintain that the maker's warmth is better felt in closeness to his body than in confinement to the box. These heretics must be discredited at every opportunity.

All this calls for a renewed commitment to the box. Love it! Defend it! Cling fiercely to all its traditions and fight blindly for every scrap of its dogma. Be warned that those who dare to study the maker's instructions outside the superior light of the box, or look outside of the box without the squint of the box, are destined to leave the box. Screw up your eyes until they are closed so tightly that no extraneous light can possibly penetrate your squint, and **stay in the box!**