

Anonymous: **Conformity**

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He always wanted to say things. But no one understood.
He always wanted to explain things. But no one cared.
So he drew.
Sometimes he would draw and it wasn't anything. He wanted to carve it in stone, or write it in the sky.
He would lie out on the grass, and look up in the sky, and it would only be him, and the sky, and the things inside that needed saying.
And it was after that, that he drew the picture. It was a very beautiful picture.
And when it was dark, and his eyes were closed, he could still see it.
And it was all of him, and he loved it.
When he started school, he brought it with him. Not to show anyone, just to have with him like a friend.
It was funny about school.
He sat in a square, gray desk. Like all of the other square gray desks. And he thought it should be red.
And his room was a square, gray room. Like all of the other rooms.
And it was tight, and close, and stiff.
He hated to hold the pencil and the chalk, with his arms stiff and his feet flat on the floor, stiff, with the teacher watching and watching.
And then he had to write the numbers. And they weren't anything.
They were worse than the letters that could be something when you put them all together.
And the numbers were tight and square, and he hated the whole thing.
The teacher came and spoke to him. She told him to wear a tie like all of the other little boys.
He said he didn't like them. She said it didn't matter.
After that they drew.
And he drew all yellow, and it was the way he felt about morning, and it was beautiful.
The teacher came again and smiled down at him. What's this, she asked?
Why don't you draw something like your friend's drawing? Isn't that beautiful?
It was all questions.
After that his mother bought him a tie.
And he always drew airplanes and rocket ships like everyone else.
And he threw the old picture away.
And when he lay out alone looking at the sky, it was big, and blue, and all of everything.
But he wasn't anymore.
He was square inside, and gray, and his hands were stiff, and he was like everyone else.
And that thing inside that needed saying, it didn't need saying anymore.
It had stopped pushing.
It was crushed.
Stiff.
Like everything else.

***This was an English assignment for a high school senior.
Two weeks after writing it, the young man committed suicide.***