

SEVEN (7)

(SEVEN)

...ATTEMPTS

AT A DEFINITION

(IMMA TRYING OK?)

By

*Mica Sen*

**WHY I LIKE IT: Fiction Editor JOEY CRUSE writes...**

*Spoiler alert:*

“I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description [“hard-core pornography”], and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that.”

*At the heart of Mica Sen’s, “Seven Attempts at a Definition,” lies the crux of what we see and how we define and the sheer impossibility that each human reading will have an entirely different concept in their perspective. Eliot’s objective correlative is rolling in its grave.*

*I truly do like this piece. From the fact that I now currently live in Tennessee and can see how backwards and woods they are, to the simple acknowledgement that the definition of what is being sought is never defined.*

*We will always attempt to define our world around us, but what we will never be able to do is describe anything past our own perceptions – something in me says that the word tautology is applicable in this instance – and that is the fault in our stars. The 20’s destroyed that for us, the postmodernists revived it for us, but, in our great, violently available times, is the fact that we must accept an other’s definition.*

*As hard and as simple as this piece goes, the image of life created is complex.*

*Never an easy feat to achieve while writing, but certainly worth enjoying.*

*You should read this.*

**QUALITY QUOTABLE (for the love of language...)**

Apparently the last thing every pilot does on every crashing plane is call for his mother. I learned that from a late-night radio show I listened to once driving through Kentucky, after the segment where they argued about the best Doritos flavor and before the one where they gave callers advice on their dating lives...

527 words

Seven Attempts at a Definition

1. Fuck if I know. Why ask me, of all people?
2. So my parents got divorced when I was two. Amicably, which is rare and odd, like two full moons in a month. They both got married again. Sometimes we'd even all get together, both families. One time Dad started telling this story where he was camping as a teenager and a bear attacked his tent. Mom began heckling him, saying it used to be a raccoon, now it was a bear, and soon enough he'd be saying he was charged by Sasquatch himself. No way, Dad said. Everyone knows Sasquatch is Canadian, never seen south of the border. We all laughed, got quiet for a second, then scrambled to start talking again.
3. My grandparents, on the other hand, stayed together until the bitter end. They were both cheating on each other like crazy. (My aunt Terri used to work at an old folk's home. You wouldn't believe the STDs, she said.) After Grandpa died, Grandma said he was definitely in purgatory. She said, I know your mother's praying that he'll go to heaven, but I'm praying for him to go the other way, so I think it comes out even and he'll stay in purgatory forever. Later they buried her next to him. Could be they're in purgatory together.
4. My brother got married a year after it became legal in the state of Tennessee, which was when it became legal in the whole country - God bless Tennessee. It was the only fun wedding I've ever been to. I went alone. Aunt Terri finished a bottle of white wine before grabbing a mic and saying, Oliver and Dante have the most remarkable romance I've ever seen. Who would've thought it would be the two guys? Maybe not the most woke thing ever, but kind of sweet. A few times when I was a kid, I had these nightmares where my brother died and I had to do all of life by myself. I couldn't fall back asleep until I checked that he was still breathing. At the bottom of my third Guinness it occurred to

me: if Oliver died tomorrow, I'd still have to do my whole life alone. But if I died, he wouldn't.

5. I had this girlfriend a while back, in business school. She was Indian. Actually, she was from New Jersey, but her folks were Indian. They'd eloped, fled to America, because their families couldn't accept their unarranged love. Now they were getting divorced. Goes to show you, she said, addressing the swirling ice in her mojito. It's all definitely fake. Then she looked up at me and grinned and said, Just kidding. I totally believe in it.
6. Apparently the last thing every pilot does on every crashing plane is call for his mother. I learned that from a late-night radio show I listened to once driving through Kentucky, after the segment where they argued about the best Doritos flavor and before the one where they gave callers advice on their dating lives. It didn't sound wrong.
7. What's that thing that one judge said about porn? Let's go with that.

#### **AUTHOR'S NOTE:**

*I wish this piece had a cool, offbeat origin, but in reality I wrote it in response to a prompt for a class. When asked to define the word in question my first thought was - well, the first lines. I filtered my musings on the concept through the consciousness of an invented individual with their own (hopefully authentic-seeming) life story and voice. Naturally, I peppered in some attempts at humor.*

*In its original form, this story was formatted like a dictionary definition. I looked to many short fictions with unusual forms for inspiration. Two of my favorites are "Help Me Follow My Sister Into the Land of the Dead" by Carmen Maria Machado and "An Index of How Our Family Was Killed" by Matt Bell, though my story obviously didn't turn out much like either of those - for starters, the body count is lower.*

**AUTHOR BIO:** Mica Sen is an aspiring writer currently living out in the desert.