

*Steve Glines*

**How we are different from them**

He's the one that used to mow your lawn. His father remembers your father. They are fifth generation "landscape architects." The grandfather used to own the farm that became this neighborhood. His uncle works in the industrial greenhouse. His mother works as a nurse's aid. They are all around you. You think they only drink beer.

They have no history. They live for *now*, working just hard enough to pay for life's necessities and a little extra. Tomorrow will be the same. Nice life. This is how they have lived for thousands of years. Ambition is something for the foolhardy dreamers that life leaves by the side of the road like so much roadkill. Ambitious men fail. The prodigal son was ambitious. It's dangerous to dream, it wastes time and doesn't feed the chickens, goats, horses or car. The only good ambition is getting a new roof on your shed, a new cast iron pot, a new knife, a new gun, a new car, a new HD TV. The only safe goal (it's not quite an ambition) is getting that one more little thing that makes life enjoyable. Its all about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; wine, women and song; sex, drugs and rock and roll. In whatever order you prefer, it doesn't really matter as long as there is bread and circus.

For all their faults they are still the salt of the earth. Without them there would be no harvest, no tailor, no roads to drive that new car on. Someone has to do the work and they are both grateful and resentful at the same time that there is work to be done. You can count on them. They work hard and at the end of the day they die and their children work hard too. It has been this way for millennia and will be for many more. They are eternal and blind.

We are different of course. We have a vision! A vision not shared with them. It's this vision, not ambition, that drives us and we pursue it with a blindness beyond foolish. A curse they say. They mock us when we fail and despise us when we succeed but without us there would be nothing. We built the pyramids with their labor. We painted the Mona Lisa and the Sistine Chapel; we carved the Pieta and build the Grand Coulee Dam; we said we would send men to the moon and we did.

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We crafted each Civilization with our minds but we grew tired and let the Goths, the Huns, the Hordes in and presided over the last meeting of the Roman Senate. We built the great engines of industry and, when they fail they ask us to fix it. They won't fix it, they can't. We can't always fix it ether; being mortal our vision is only so large, so comprehensive.

Our soul cries out to the Universe, to God: You made us in your image, perfect our vision, our wisdom, our understanding so that this time it will be perfect.

You want to melt into them. No cares, no worries, just life but your mother said you were special. "You come from a long line ...," she said, "You must be better than the best of them."