





Differencing Society

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Once, upon a time, two groups of people lived in separate harmony. One believed in perfection, while the other embraced imperfection. The first group were traditionalists who thrived off structure and believed their past helped them be the best version of themselves. They were educated and intelligent. They were known as ARs. The other group's imagination, creativity and willingness to fail allowed them to live a freer life. They were called the MAs. The ARs ruled the society as royalty, while the MAs were artists and free spirits.

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Julie, an AR(2), was the AR people's princess and lived a beautiful life where she was given everything she ever wanted. The greater the number assigned to the person, the less they were considered in society. Therefore, Julie was highly thought of.

On the eve of her 21st birthday, she decided to walk inside the palace's garden. She saw a man dressed in old clothes covered in a mixture of fresh and old paint, who was painting a mural for her. When he turned around and looked into her eyes, they both fell in love. Upon approaching him, she realised that he was part of the MA tribe. After many hurdles and being treated as outsiders, they became the first ARMA couple.

During the seventy years of their marriage, the ARMA union changed everything, leading to many AR and MA marriages. But this created a whole new group of people with the Integrated gene.

They discovered that they were affected by the concept of time; therefore, they were non-stationary in their being, while the pure MA and AR groups were stationary. This resulted in the ARIMA race.

The ARIMA race became the outcast of the country. They had the worst jobs in society. They were known as the unhappiest race. The higher their integrated gene was, the worse the discrimination they felt.

Dave was a 14-year-old ARIMA(6,7,6). He was among the most non-stationary people because his integrated gene was 7. He was from one of the poorest families of the Integrated race in his whole village. He felt alone even though he had four older siblings and loving parents. Other parents used to tell their children not to play with him out of fear. His siblings all pretended not to know him.

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One day, after a horrible day at school, he sat on his favourite bench under an old tree. He was praying for a better life, and a gush of wind brought a flyer to his feet. In frustration, he was about to tear up the flyer. Then he saw “The Differencing Society” in big, bold letters, a place where they promised to make you less different. He felt like his prayers had been answered. At that moment, he ran away from school and his parents and vowed only to return once he was less different, less ugly.

After walking all day and all night, he finally came to the headquarters of the Differencing Society, known as DS. He saw a long queue of people, all with the same look of hope written on their faces. For the first time, he felt he was seen and belonged. What consumed his thoughts was a new life filled with love, joy, and acceptance.

After what felt like years, he finally reached the front of the gate and was met with a question, “Do you have the payment?”



This shocked him to his core, and looking at the flyer in the bottom right-hand corner in fine print, he saw the most insulting words he had ever seen.

He left defeated. He found a bench under an old tree that resembled the one from his village. All he could think of was the fact that his hope was gone. Raising his head, he noticed an old man - around seventy years old.

The man asked him, “Are you okay, son?”

At that invitation, he told him everything. The old man sat with him for another ten minutes. Then he left, saying, “What you are looking for isn’t there.”

Dave did not understand the meaning of those words. After an hour, he finally got the courage to head home. As he got off the bench, he noticed the leather bag. Upon opening the bag, he was greeted with gold; beautiful yellow gold filled over half this bag. With the gold in his hand, he ran back to DS.

After undergoing the differencing procedure, he was told to stay for a month to recover and fully become stationary. During his stay, he noticed he could not access a part of himself. He felt incomplete, which for him felt worse than having extra. The faces around him echoed this thought.

One sunny day, he decided to leave his recovery center and take a walk. He ended up on the same bench. The old man came to him and asked him if he was okay.

“No, just different” he replied.

The old man told him he was no longer different. Upon hearing this, his heart broke, and he cried.

Looking up, he noticed the old man was still with him. He was puzzled, and before he could speak, the old man told him that his parents were the first ARMA couple and never felt accepted, that he was the first of the non-stationary race, an ARIMA(1,1,1). Regrettably, he was smart and came up with a DS. With a disappointed look, he said he wished Dave had taken the money for something else.

The old man offered him a red sweet that would undo the differencing - allowing Dave to return to how things were. Without a moment of hesitation, he took the sweet and felt revived.

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He finally realised that joy was inside him all along. Without returning to the institution, he told everyone who listened about the beauty of being different. He lived his life happier and more loving than any stationary person and proved that the answer was always within ourselves.

