Pigeonholed

Some societies have a name for every type of relative, some a word for every type of cloud. Melvin's society had names for every type of person, based on politics, placing people in pigeonholes. Everyone had a label for what they were. It was so comfy! You were conservative or liberal, rich or poor, one race or another, on the top or the bottom, aggressive or placid. It was comfy, everyone having a label–even though underneath their label everyone had complex, conflicting opinions.

George was very concerned. Everyone discussed but got nowhere. You were a worker or home maker [often both], a doer or follower. Most did not mind being slotted, they grew up with it, yet at times it felt confining. Like-minded groups connected in coops. George saw how society struggled. One group or another got power and used it to push their way, in roughly ten year cycles. George found the current cycle concerning–the new President came from the rich, authoritarian, climate-denying Epstein pigeonhole.

George believed the pigeonholed had to flee their coops. No one should be trapped in who they were supposed to be, disparaging or ignoring other opinions. Argument and constant debate from opposing sides made society better but in his nation, no one compromised

George's own pigeonhole–computer nerd—kept him out of sight, allowing him to create a Device. He was North American and to solve problems creating devices was what North Americans did [pigeonhole.] He created a broadcast device using cell towers across the nation and turned it on. His device had only one impact: everyone forgot they were in a slot.

George settled into his favourite armchair with a beer and pizza and turned on the TV. On station after station he saw the broadcast studio empty or reruns being played. George went on the web and found some sites frozen while others burst with activity. The next morning, the TV outlets broadcast only static but he found news on the web. Instead of seeking compromise, civil war had broken out. Opposing groups physically confronted each other, demanding compliance.

George turned off the Device.

He sat thoughtful as he finished the pizza [as befitting his computer nerd

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pigeonhole] and watched TV recover and people return to their normal roosts, thinking what he achieved was demonstrating how important to some people their politics were. Why? Because, he concluded, of the lives they led.

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