

Foreword

Welcome to **dime 10**: The Donnelly College Student Journal. In this new, Spring 2022 edition, we have continued to amplify student voices and engage their creativity. We deeply appreciate the work Donnelly students put into this journal and are especially proud that this edition has added content: a Fiction category and two submissions from Lansing Correctional Facility. Moreover, the two Dragon Scholars who worked on this edition provided invaluable help in preparing the manuscript and in planning the events around the release.

This journal was composed in the vein of Mark Twain's serious yet cheerful proclamation that, "By trying, we can easily learn to endure adversity. Another man's, I mean." May these readings and these visuals invite conversations that you otherwise would never have, and inspire you to create stories and art. Write it all down so that others know. Paint it so the others see. If you think you are failing, keep trying and keep a smile on your face and in your heart.

– Paula Console-Şoican

Submit YOUR work for the next issue of dime and

The Sister Mary Faith Schuster Awards

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Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award Winners:

Mis Tios

Daniel Zavala
Poetry

The Colonization of Mexican Texas by Anglo Settlers

Jesus Garcia
Academic Essay

Self-Portrait with Mayan Inspired Designs

Hugo Juarez Avalos
Visual Arts

Rain

Grace Meade-Esvang
Fiction

Low-Caste Education in a Refugee Camp

Aadesh Biswa
Creative Nonfiction

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Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award Winner

Mis Tios
Daniel Zavala

Growing up I've always had tios around me
They always told me how to be a man
How to be strong and brave, to never fear anything
That they were always right and no one should doubt them
I wanted to be like them
To be brave and strong
To be a man
As the years go by, I start seeing the flaws in these men
Realizing that they were never mentoring me
They were bullying me
Ridiculing me
Mocking me
Did I still want to be like them?
Be stuck in the past, already peaked in life, not accepting age
Did I still want to be a man like them?
I've been skinny my whole life
Wore glasses and even had my own set of inhalers
I was the furthest thing from a man
For me to even try and be like them would result in embarrassment

I was always the one they laughed at
Every Sunday I'd see them at church, on their knees for God
Who were they?
They weren't the same tios
Where did all their malice go?
Where did all their machismo go?
Suddenly it felt like they were strangers
They would have the Virgin Mary tatted on their torso
Signifying their love for her
Yet never showed any love for their own spouses
Never showing that same compassion for the people that cared for
them

Mary is the symbol of a celestial being
Pure and honest
So why is she on their body?
Their whole lives they spent it fighting on the streets
Causing riots and being in gangs
Never letting my mom continue her education
Did I still want to be like them?
For them, being a loser of a human being was exactly what a man
should be
Break your back all week for the white man
Then spend all that money on liquor
Then rinse and repeat
Is that what being a man was?
But it wasn't that I wanted to be like them
It was more about if I was destined to be like them
Eventually I started fighting too
But out of necessity
To fend for myself
For if it weren't for my own kin making me feel worthless
It were my own classmates that did
Mis tios always said to never back down from a fight
Always stand your ground and never give up
Only time I ever listened to them
Fighting is how I got through in life
How I got everything I ever wanted
But even then, I would sometimes meet up with mis tios
But now it was different
They weren't mocking me, ridiculing me
They were being nice
Mis tios made fun of me for wearing glasses and using inhalers
Now their bodies are wearing down on them
Eventually time got what it wanted
Did they respect me?
I don't think so
Did they see me differently?
I think so
Time passing by is a beautiful and depressing thing

Mis tios never once showed me sympathy
But now I'm getting a taste of it
My goal in life was to break the cycle
End the plague that was cursing the family
Their children, my cousins, may continue it
But I'm ending it here
I won't be like them
No, I'll be different
I'll show love and compassion
Empathy and heart
I'll be the uncle everyone needs
And the male role model I wish I always had
I'll be different
I'll be my own man
Mis tios aren't what they used to be
They're suffering
They're asking for mercy
Mis tios, my family, want to be forgiven by me
Should I forgive them?
They hurt me, they traumatized me, they forgot about me
I don't see why I should forgive them
But I did
I forgave them
I saw the guilt in their eyes
Mis tios, my blood
Weren't making fun of me anymore
I felt remorse
One of them got deported
One has shut the family out, isolated himself
And the other passed away, my godfather
Mis tios aren't the same
I take a look at who I am now
A man
But a man not like them
I forgave them
I just hope God does too
Mis tios will always be my blood
Mi sangre
Mi familia
Mis tios

Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award Winner

The Colonization of Mexican Texas by Anglo Settlers

Jesus Garcia

Before Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, the United States was already a Republic with an experienced government and a healthy economy. In that same year, a landowner from Tennessee, Moses Austin, struck a deal with the Mexican government to buy land and bring settlers to Texas.

After its independence from Spain in 1821, Mexico wanted immigrants to mainly populate its northern territories. The first recorded immigration of American settlers was the one negotiated by Stephen Austin's father Moses Austin, who in the early 1820s negotiated with the emperor of Mexico the relocation of American Families to Texas. Historian Eugene Baker notes that "Agustin de Iturbide's rump congress, the junta Instituyente... offered heads of families a league and labor and land of (4,605 acres) and other inducements and provided for the employment of agents, called empresarios, to promote immigration" (257). It follows then that since its birth on September 28, 1821, Mexico was intent on populating only its northern territories.

Historians have proven that Mexico has been welcoming and hospitable to strangers from other lands and groups of people that did not speak the same language and did not have the same culture. Mexicans were predominantly Catholic, while the white settlers were mostly Protestant. Accepting settlers was an oddity because since the ascendancy of the Mexican Empire, the only official religion was Roman Catholicism. In other words, there was Xenophobia against people that did not practice the Catholic faith. Andrew and Cleven stated it was the law of the land: "The religion of New Spain is, and shall be, the Roman Catholic Apostolical, without tolerating any other" (320).

The definition of Xenophobia is explained by *Cambridge Dictionary* as "extreme dislike or fear of foreigners, their customs,

their religions, etc.” Xenophilia then can be described as having a welcoming and positive feeling for other cultures. Mexico’s Emperor articulated Xenophilia to Anglo settlers to migrate to the Northern territories, especially to Texas, and as time passed, they became successful and the economy thrived. Notably, most of the Mexican population at that time was Indigenous either native Indian or mestizo. In contrast, the government of Mexico was mostly made of criollos (Spanish for a person of pure Spanish descent but born in New Spain).

There was solidarity especially in the first years prior and during the struggle for Independence in Mexico; they fought and died alongside each other for Independence. Criollos, native Mexicans, as well as Afro Mexicans banded together to fight for Independence. More over, were militia units commanded by a mulatto general whose name was Vicente Guerrero who would eventually become President of Mexico and would officially abolish slavery on September 16, 1829. The official decree by Guerrero was enforced throughout the whole country, but in Texas it was mostly ignored. By the year 1836, Texas fought for Independence from Mexico because the white settlers did not want to free their slaves. As Theodore Vincent states in his journal "Although not initially enforced in Texas, its eventual enforcement there contributed to the 1836 slave owner secession of Texas from Mexico" (153).

The decree by Vicente Guerrero was the catalyst for the Texas Independence Movement, showing the kind of hospitality one group of people bestowed on the other. Mexicans were hospitable, although conditionally, because of their religion, but nonetheless the settlers were welcomed and accepted by the locals as well as the government of Mexico. In time, some of the white settlers that migrated to Texas eventually became Xenophobic and started to sanitize the territory of Mexicans. There are some parallels to today's immigration because there are many Mexican migrants in Texas. The white settlers took advantage of the hospitality the Mexicans had offered them, and eventually they overthrew the government and declared Independence from Mexico.

Hospitality can be described as serving other people with their basic needs without expecting anything in return. Being hospitable is a biblical tradition going back thousands of years just like the good book says “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.” (Leviticus 19:33-34). Solidarity can be described as accepting people no matter how they look, how they speak, how they drink, where they come from, where they are going, and even how they act when approached by different people. As explained by Dufourmantelle and Derrida in their book *Of Hospitality*, even animals should be welcomed “Let us say yes to who or what turns up, before any determination, before any anticipation, before any identification, whether or not it has to do with a foreigner, an immigrant...a human, animal, or divine creature, a living or dead thing, male or female” (77).

The colonization of Texas by white settlers is a complex issue because, in the beginning, Moses Austin and his son Stephen had to negotiate a fragile deal in which they had to obey Mexican rule while still owning slaves. As time passed, English-speaking people eventually outnumbered the native Spanish-speaking population of the Mexican territory. Significantly the decree by Vicente Guerrero in which he abolished slavery, white settlers were illegally immigrating to Texas, even defying the Mexican government by bringing in more slaves. In the 1820s and 1830s there were two kinds of illegal immigrants in Texas: the Anglos (white settlers) and the African American slaves. Of course, what sets these two groups apart is that the African Americans were illegal by force, and not by choice: they were slaves, owned by white settlers.

It is hard to imagine how those people lived, but it is not hard to see what is going on today in the United States and its immigration problem, just as Mexico had an immigration problem in the 1830s the United States is facing a comparable situation. Being a powerful country with a low unemployment rate and a high standard of living, people from other countries want to immigrate to the United States. Just as white settlers wanted to immigrate to

the Mexican territory and have a homestead, there are now millions of people around the world that want to come to the United States and make a homestead, and have the right of “life, liberty and pursuit of happiness” as the United States Declaration of Independence states.

In her 2008 fictional book *The Guardians* Ana Castillo describes how the Mexican American population has developed and is thriving just like the Americans did in the time of the independence of Texas. Ana Castillo’s book describes stories of hospitality, but also of compassion, because in the story a middle-aged woman takes in a troubled teenager and helps him to be a better person. In her book, Castillo explains the lives of the population in the border area, and how they interact with each other no matter their immigration status. It should be noted that today Mexican and Mexican Americans are not advocating for independence or revolt against the government, they advocate for the opposite.

Today, Mexican and Mexican-Americans are not advocating for independence or revolt against the government, they advocate for the opposite. Mexicans Americans advocate for immigrants’ human rights not the right to own slaves; they also have very patriotic children who serve in the United States Military with honor and distinction. Mexican-Americans in the military are defending a land that was already theirs in the first place. But going back to the 1800s, Mexicans went from being a majority in a sparsely populated state to being the minority because they were too hospitable to their new immigrant neighbors.

Solidarity and hospitality in today’s terms can mean different things; they can have different meanings in different countries. The basic solidarity and hospitality shown in the 1800s by the Mexican population meant respect and acceptance of people who did not speak the same language and did not practice the same religion.

To conclude, the solidarity and hospitality shown by the Mexicans to the white settlers in the 1820s and 1830s should be emulated

by the United States Government. Solidarity and hospitality do not mean that any government is obligated to help just anybody that ends up at its borders, that is not the government's job. The government's job is to make sure its people are safe, because if people are safe, then they can show their own hospitality and solidarity to foreigners.

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Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award Winner

Self-Portrait with Mayan Inspired Designs

Hugo Juarez Avalos



Rain

Grace Meade-Esvang

Prologue - The Children of Time

In the beginning, from the emptiness of the void emerged Mother Time, the universe herself, and she gave birth to many deities. As gifts, Time created worlds for each deity to rule over, one of which was the Green World, a place of majestic mountains, lush fields, mystical forests, and beautiful lakes. The Three Graces, deities of life, nature, and love, received the Green World and filled the lands and oceans with numerous magical creatures. Finally, the three bore a new race of beings in their own image, the Gracians, and bestowed upon them the responsibility of protecting their creations from evil.

The new people formed the queendom of Gratysia, using the magic they inherited to evolve society and excel technologically. Their most powerful creation was the *Metaforicon*, a powerful spell book that would grant the user with the ability to travel between worlds or even create new ones, powers which were otherwise limited to the deities, and to form new worlds was something only Mother Time was thought to be able to do. Fearing what would happen if the book were to fall in evil's hands, the Graces seized the book and tried to hide it from their siblings, but that could not stop what was about to come.

A sibling of the Graces was Hate, the god of death and ruler of the Dark World. Unlike his siblings, he grew jealous as he watched the other deities receive their worlds. Corrupted with greed, he sought to conquer his siblings and rein over their rightful worlds. Observing the Gracians, he became aware of the *Metaforicon* and made a plan to steal the book and harness its power. And so the king of darkness invaded the Green World and trapped the Graces in stone. Powerless to stop him, the Graces watched as their own creations suffered under his wrath. To hide the location of the

stone, the dark spirit put a curse on the land, fragmenting the world into separate islands, floating far apart in the sky. Before another world could be harmed, the other deities took action, combining their powers to strip the evil deity of his own and seal off the Green World, trapping him inside. Without the aid of the *Metaforicon*, nothing could enter or leave. Knowing this, Hate vowed that he would find the book and take revenge on his siblings, and with that he vanished, never revealing himself to the inhabitants of the Green World again.

Centuries would pass and the fragmented world, tainted by evil, would have countless wars. Eventually, the high isles claimed superiority to the isles beneath and a caste system was formed, giving birth to the regions we know today as the Highlands, the Midlands, and the Bottoms. The Highlanders were the wealthiest members of society, and from them emerged an oppressive government that seized control of the skies. Without their goddess, the creatures of the world began to lose their magic, but those who retained their powers posed a threat to the Highlanders, so soldiers were sent out to find and capture every remaining magical creature to stifle any chance of them overthrowing their rein. One can only hope that a hero will rise up to put an end to this persecution and to stop Hate before he finds the *Metaforicon* and uses its power to pull the whole world into darkness.



Chapter 1 - Rainfall

It was cold and dark in the cave. Rainy wanted to go home, but she was too frightened of her captors to attempt an escape. She wasn't sure how long she had been enslaved for, but she knew it was long enough to make her mother worried sick. *I wish I had listened to her.* She slid down onto the damp floor and hugged herself tight, imagining her mother's warm, comforting embrace, but memories of the day she fell kept creeping back in.

Rainy lived a shielded life with her mother in the small, feudal village of Teolioli, located on one of the lower isles in the Midlands. To a stranger, this land would seem quite small to have its own monarchy. "It was once much larger," her mother told her. "On the outskirts of the village there once lay a beautiful forest that stretched far and wide, and it was home to many amazing creatures. But one day the ground beneath our feet was torn apart and the forest was never seen again. Now, only evil is outside Teolioli, this is why you mustn't come too close to the edge."

Her mother would never talk specifically about what was outside Teolioli. She was always told to stay home; home is safe, and if the legend was true and there really were bad things out there, Rainy didn't know about them, but she wanted to. She was starting to feel more like an adult and wanted to explore the skies. During the countless hours she'd spend in her room—only leaving to run errands for Mother or occasionally sneak out to play with her friends—she'd draw in her notebook scenes of those incredible airships she'd see at the dock, with herself as the captain.

One fateful night, as Rainy was sketching in her room, there was a knocking at the door. From the armor-clad footsteps, she could tell it was a soldier, or maybe two. Mother answered the door, and after what seemed like minutes of whispered conversation—too quiet for Rainy to make out—Mother called to her.

"Rainy," she paused for a moment, "there's something I must sort out at the castle. I'll return in the morning, so don't go anywhere."

“Yes, Mother,” she replied with an annoyed tone in her voice. She didn’t like to be told to stay put. Nevertheless, she trusted that Mother knew what she was talking about, but that didn’t stop curiosity from getting the better of her. After she was sure Mother and the two soldiers were out of earshot, she put the hood of her tunic over her head and crept out of the house. Navigating behind the buildings and through the bushes, she eventually reached the drawbridge. hidden under shadows and branches, she waited. And waited. Mother did not come.

As she started to become bored, Rainy left her hiding spot and wandered over to the opposite end of the village, near the dock. Seeing that the port was vacant and that there was nobody to stop her this time, she weaved under the rope fence to get a clearer view off the edge. As she approached the drop-off, she felt some droplets trickled down her neck; it was beginning to rain. Before going any further, she stopped and debated whether it was wise to continue, or if she should heed her mother’s words and return home. That night, Rainy was feeling brave, so she decided to venture forth. Finally at the place where land and sky met, she crouched down and grasped the damp soil, peering over the edge.

Nothing but blackness.

It was the middle of the night after all. She thought she could see the outline of some trees in the distance, but it was probably just her mind playing tricks on her. The storm was here now, so it was time to take cover indoors. Already soaking wet, a disappointed Rainy carefully got back on her feet.

But then a bolt of lightning flashed in the distance.

Lightning strikes! There must be land beneath!

She couldn't believe her eyes. The forest must be real, or at least something was down there that she hadn't seen before. Curiosity returned and the spirit of adventure possessed her once again. This was just like the scenes from her drawings, only real. When was she going to get another chance like this? *I have to get down*

there, but how? Unfortunately, her feet acted before her mind and she slipped on the wet grass. Heart beating out of her chest, she instinctively clawed at the ground, unable to grip onto anything but what had become soft, wet soil. Her lower body was pulled further and further, faster and faster off the edge. Her final effort was to open her mouth and cry out for help, but even that was stifled by a suffocating roar of thunder, drowning out all sounds, all thoughts, all hope. She watched as Teolioli, her home, her friends, her Mother, her life all left her fingertips and disappeared into the dark, foggy void.

Rainy fell.

But just as it is true that rain falls from the sky, it will always seek to make the journey back home among the clouds.

To be continued



Mono Titi
Juliet Her

Low-Caste Education in a Refugee Camp

Aadesh Biswa

“Aadesh, you are diamond in the rough,” said my mentor of 2 years. I had never heard that phrase, so I asked him what he meant; but truthfully, I do not quite remember his explanation, except that it meant I harnessed the power of raw talent. As I began to think back on all the teachers I had in the past, I could recall everyone who had shown or verbalized the good quality of a student in me- more than once. I truly believe it was the passion I have for education that caused them to have a good report of me; but even with their impressed mind, being born in a low caste system crippled me to advance in education in the refugee camp I grew up in.

I was born and raised exposed. The thin wall of bamboo was not enough to protect me from the cold air coming from the war-like environment of the refugee camp in Nepal; so, as my body was covered in blood the wind dried the blood into my skin, never to be rubbed off again. Being a son in Nepal comes with a responsibility to be a savior for your family and being a low caste in this culture forged my future to walk on a sharp knife.

In Nepali culture, your caste determines everything you ought to do in your life. Nepali was the language we spoke primarily but besides the low caste people, other castes had the language of their own depending on their caste- For example, Gurung, a common last name, had Gurung language. Much like the language, your caste would also determine what career you had to pursue, whether that is a goldsmith or a doctor. However, for the very low caste, Darjee, they were to become tailors and musicians to play at weddings. For my caste, the 2nd lowest, we were to play with hot steels and forge knives. We were stuck, forced, to our role while for other higher caste such as Rai, Gurung, Bahun could be lamas (monks), priests, or whatever they wanted to- although they would never lower their standard to sew clothes or forge cutlery. I can

still remember working with my Babai, grandpa, and my Buba, dad, in our aran, smithy, at a very young age. I had to familiarize myself with trees for coals, blades and its durability, flames, and sparks- not fully knowing I was being trained into our fated family curse. You see, I was raised quite uniquely and was taught the power of the pen is the most powerful weapon in the world.

My Buba never received an education, just the skills to forge blades, but my mum did. She was determined as a teenager to get an education, even if that meant waking up at 3 in the morning to do all the house chores. This included going to the jungle to cut grass for cows and goats, getting the water from the well pump, feeding all the animals, brooming the courtyard, and making food for the family. Being a low caste as she was, my mum could not afford to go to school so she would get used school uniforms, which is used as an ID for students, from her friends and would go to school. She always reminds us how unfortunate it was to sit in a class and not have her name called during attendance. She would tell us of this as if it was her dream to raise her hand proudly and say “present” in the class, instead of ducking away from the teacher and hoping not to be noticed. Everyone in the village discouraged her to go to school and focus on house chores, but despite all the noise, she challenged everyone to one day change their mind. Unfortunately, her education had to stop when my Buba charmed my hajurbuba, my grandpa from mom’s side, with his “Biswa” skills of forging blades. Obviously, my mum had no say in this and she had to quietly pack away her dreams and desire to be educated- with that marriage came another story, out of thousands, of low caste education becoming an unimaginable thing to obtain - in and out of the refugee camp.

Once my siblings and I were born, mum was very determined for us to get the education and attempt to do something in our lives. The education system in a refugee camp failed my oldest sister and even years later failed another sister- and soon I was going to be a victim of it as well. Furious at the refugee school, when I was born my Buba went away to the mountains to work so we, I, could have a sustainable future. I was sent to my mamaghar,

grandparents' house- which was located outside of the refugee camp, to receive a good education. With my dad paying my tuition for the boarding school, I was able to go to a prestigious school right beside the school my mum would sneak into. I went to boarding school, and as God said in the bible "it was good." Quickly, I was one of the ideal students, and my aunty made sure of it. She, too, understood the power of education so she made sure I was a student above all things. I had begun to live my mum's dream at the age of 6. My good education drained my family more than ever, but they continued to support me. After a year of my schooling, an opportunity to go to the United States traveled to my house, and I had to come back to go to the refugee school to prove my status as a refugee. When I came back it was the end of my academic excellence.

Each of my courses in the refugee camp became easy to me, I was not really challenged, and although my teachers noticed they did nothing about it. My friend, Chandra Bista, told me about tuition (extra course study) my principal was doing for the students. I was thrilled and desperately wanted to be a part of that prestigious opportunity. It took a while to convince my mum, then she finally agreed to pay the fee so I could enroll. With the biggest smile on my face, my friend and I went to the principal's house- I was ready to be educated. As we sat on the floor, the principal began asking us for our names to invoice the bill. He asked my friend his name, and he said "Chandra Bista." Then, the principal asked me my name, "Aadesh Biswa" I said. He paused writing and looked up to me, "Aadesh Bista?" he asked, and I replied saying, "No, Aadesh Biswa." He got up and told me to walk with him. He took me outside his house and said I cannot enter his house and told me to leave. I think this was one of the biggest traumas I faced as a child and from that day, I felt unwelcome everywhere I went. I had heard about caste differences, but from then on, as an 8-year-old, every time I went to school, I knew I was unwelcomed because the principal would be there. I knew whatever I touched would become "dirty" and curse those who dared to touch what I touched. I finally began to smell, through the nose of my society, the blood that dried on my skin on my birth.

Low caste education in a refugee camp is like chewing on the nutshell, only hurting ourselves but never getting the fruit of our effort. We were forced to practice social distancing from everyone and everything our entire life- including education. You could watch others, higher caste, succeed but could not get there yourself. Even in refugee camps, everyone knew the importance of education, so real education was catered to our future leaders while the lower caste was used as a warning sign of an uneducated person's future.

The Real Education part II

Throughout the memoir of Tara Westover, we go on a journey to discover how education opens a new universe within the world created in our minds, mainly with other people's opinions. One of the powerful things the readers can see is how her relationship with books changes; since childhood, her father engrained an idea of books which caused resentment for her, but later, she discovers the positive insight of feminism through the book. This memoir is heavy on education shaping the person you become, while Mark Edmundson, in his speech *Who Are You and What Are You Doing Here? A Word to the Incoming Class* dives deeper into distinguishing the difference between education and real education. He states, not getting a real education, something you are passionate about not what other people desire on what you ought to do, is the assassination of your future (Edmundson para 27).

Reflecting on both readings, *Educated* by Westover and *Who Are You and What Are You Doing Here? A Word to the Incoming Class* by Edmundson, there is no way to get a real education for low caste people; the entire system is made to shove you in a small closet to figure out your life in there. This reminds me of the enslavement of Israel in Egypt; especially the part where it took 4 days for God to take them out of Egypt, while it took 40 years for Egypt to get out of them. Though we have been fortunate enough

to exit the refugee camp system, many populations of the low caste people still struggle with feeling unworthy to breathe outside of their homes. Unfortunately, there is no timeline in how long it can take to get the refugee system out of us, but we can be free from these ideas by pursuing a real education.

Reading a book truly does open a new world that can help readers to formulate and understand their feelings in different situations. It also helps to figure out our own likes and dislikes, but ultimately it can help us to understand how we can contribute to the world. Through the portal of books, we can discover ourselves amid all the voices of the world, and I believe, like Westover and Edmundson, true education begins with self-discovery. True education is indeed a power that can fight all crises that our world faces, and we must make a way for everyone to pursue their passion. In doing so, you will see the real diversity in the heroes of our world today.

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You Were a Coward Like Me

Aadesh Biswa

Mutual feelings that were never communicated
Innocent touch that was never fabricated
Happily ever after that was never activated



Cultural Heritage

Manju Mangar

Mother

Aadesh Biswa

Like a werewolf turning in full
moon
I emerged into the world
breaking bones
Like a volcano under the ocean
I erupted making my own island

When I would cry and ask you
for diamonds
You hid every tear and gave me
pearls
You sold your wedding gifts to
give me a world
A world beyond a refugee camp

With your bare hands, you built
me a castle
Even though all around us was
mud
You pulled ivy from the walls
and made me a crown
While I gave you thorns and
only orders

Stubborn should've been my
birth name
But I soon learned it was your
name too
When we had no wood to cook
with
You tore the bamboo from the
roof

I knew Nepal by your footprints,
would have followed you
anywhere

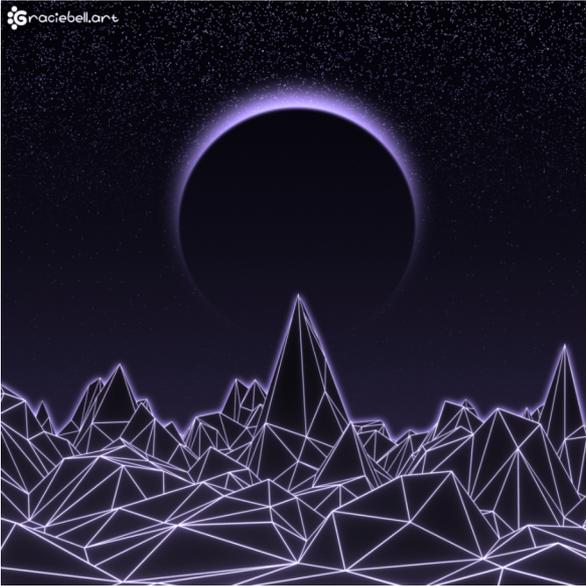
But coming to a foreign land
there was no mud to forge your
prints

I became the one you follow
when our roles were reversed
I tried my best to interpret this
world to you,
but we seem not to speak the
same language

Everything was unfamiliar to you
except for my room, with me in
it
But I needed some space too,
so I tried to close my door

I started to push you away
I quickly become frustrated for
having to repeat everything I
say
Then, I asked myself, "Is this
how I always behave?"
I now want to grow out of my
childish ways

I want to give you my world, and
footprints to follow
But you are content to
rearrange my room,
trying to speak the words we
will never say
"I love you" "I'm sorry" will
remain in the hallway
Because the next thing I seem
to do is lock myself,
so I don't see you



Terrain

Grace Meade-Esvang



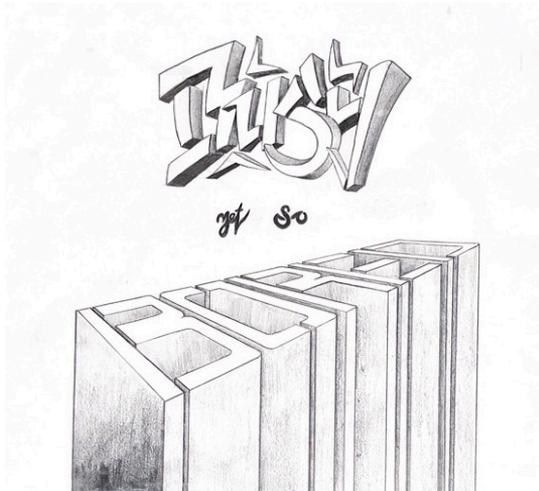
For My Ancestors I Dream

Rubi Perez



Papito

Hugo Juarez Avalos



Busy yet so Bored

Hugo Juarez Avalos

Vision of Beauty

Charles Jones

A vision is more than just seeing
It's a choice to foresee a wonderful future.

One of loyalty, devotion and secret surrenderance
The connection is genuine.

I mirror your image in my thoughts
Close my eyes and visualize the
results

Of us together for the better
Bonding like ropes, chains and leather.

Inside the truth survive
because your vibe is live

I'll give you my prize
If you open my eyes

To the truth of who you are
Let me see who you are

And don't be afraid,
I promise not to tear your heart apart.

Vision of Beauty

The Cycle of Life

Aadesh Biswa

fall

not everything will remain green
feelings will change and true color will be shown
holes in their life of perfect imperfections
you will see: people will be transparent
then you can choose to stay or go find a different shade

winter

new senses suggesting you search within
helping you get comfortable in your skin
not guilt-tripping yourself over your sin
winter reveals things for you to win

monsoon

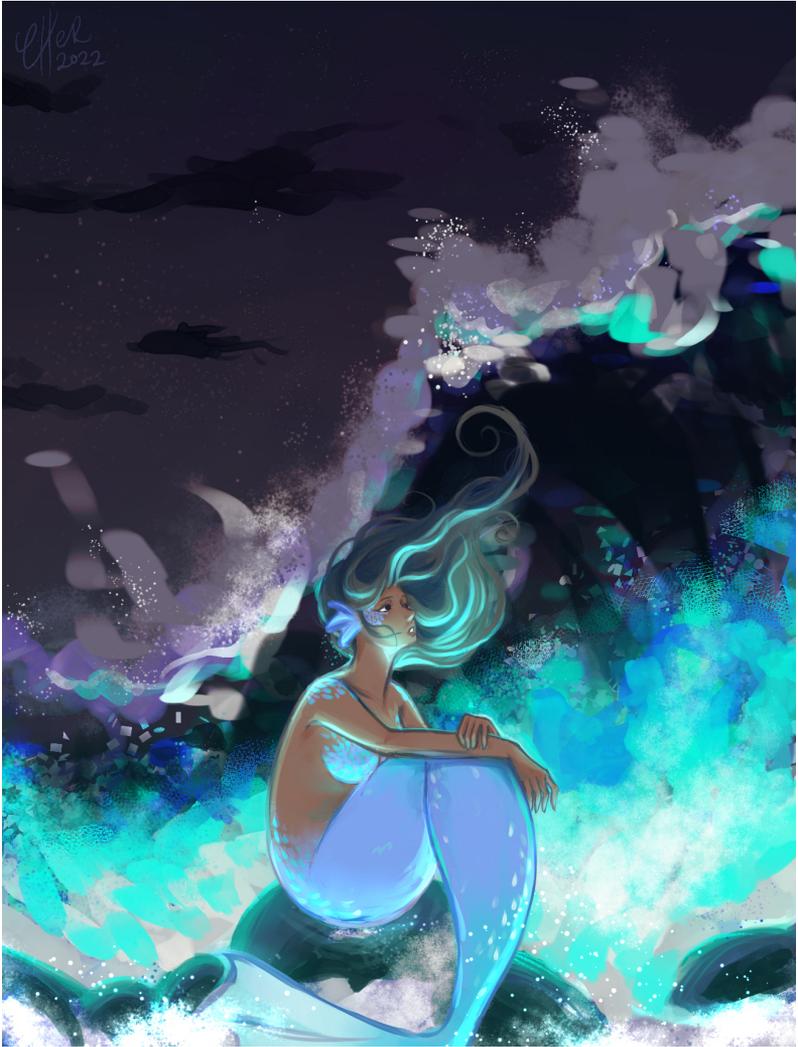
a little bit of watering wasn't enough
I needed a hurricane to grow my tree
broken branches ended up regenerating
and this time constant rain was worth celebrating

spring

after the reveal of my colors,
I was left alone and fragile to fall.
frozen in time I worked on my strength to form.
eventually, new growth started to be seen.
now I will not stop until I am evergreen

summer

a casually cruel season coming in exciting disguise
a time when even home gives strange vibes
adapting to the routine you can't describe
hellos and goodbyes repeating clockwise



Glowing Blues
Emillyanna Her

mad

pastel goth rabbit

- kind of self centered, but she doesn't think highly of herself
- loves alternative fashion
- streamer
- still plays with dolls

designed by
graciebell.art



molly

techy rabbit

- server admin
- listens to noise pop
- loves caramel lattes
- always trying to get her friends to use linux

designed by
graciebell.art



Mad and Molly Grace Meade-Esvang

On Personal Faith

Grace Meade-Esvang

"Is there an ultimate creator?" This is an age-old question that every human has asked in some form at some point or another. We are curious beings, which was key to the survival of our ancestors. We try to answer every question we have, leaving no stone unturned, but the most unanswerable question is that of our own existence. As far as we're aware, humans are the only member of the great ape family—which are some of the most intelligent species on earth—that are capable of questioning their own existence. There are a number of reasons this question is difficult to answer, and a major one is just that humans are imperfect. It's difficult to set aside our emotions or even our primordial biases to find the truth, and this affects both believers and non-believers alike. This is why we have faith, which is the strong belief in something that is based on nothing except an individual's own intuition. Faith is a wonderful way of expressing our individuality, and it should be celebrated as long as the beliefs themselves aren't inherently harmful, but not everybody agrees with that. Some people think there is something to be gained by universally proving or disproving God's existence, but those attempts fly in the face of faith and the willingness to accept that ongoing scientific research is always changing our understanding of how the universe works, and thus says something about humanity's ability to accept the unknown.

Historically, human beings have consistently proven themselves wrong; new technology is developed and old theories are rewritten. The most well known example of this is probably Galileo Galilei's assertions of heliocentrism against the Roman Catholic Church, who wanted to believe that the earth was at the center of the solar system. It was advancements in telescope technology that furthered our understanding of the universe, and it was blind acceptance of dogma that hindered the public's acceptance of scientific research. The same can be said for today. Today's

scientists are exploring quantum physics, which challenges our assumptions about causality. Many believers would argue that it's only logical for there to be something to set everything else in motion, a "first cause" as Thomas Aquinas puts it in his *Summa Theologicae*. But as recent scientific research points out, "cause" does not necessarily come first. Quantum superposition is the real phenomenon where a particle can be in multiple opposite states at once (Araújo et al), and the data scientists are finding through experimentation indicates that causal order may not be a necessary component of nature (Wolchover). Obviously this research had not been done at the time of Aquinas so he could not have known this, but it just goes to show that theories are always subject to change as our understanding of the universe grows. There cannot be a proof of the existence of a deity because our scientific understanding of the universe may very well become obsolete as time goes on, as it has in the past.

Faith is personal; you shouldn't have to prove your existential beliefs to anyone for you to truly have faith in them. Those who argue about existentialism are missing the point. If you need the support of others to believe what you want to believe, do you truly believe in it? It's ironic that some believers behave this way as in the bible itself are themes of forgiveness and acceptance. Jesus wasn't portrayed as a debater, he was portrayed as someone who was on a mission to spread the ideas of selflessness, forgiveness, and acceptance. He didn't even fight back when he was being executed. Instead, he literally asked god to "forgive them . . . for they know not what they do." So it is just absurd to me that certain people feel the need to persuade and argue against other religions while simultaneously claiming to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, arguments certain atheists make against the existence of a divine being have the same issues. They ignore the fact that faith is a personal experience and not one that is rooted in universal truth. People should be able to believe in whatever they want as long as it doesn't infringe on other people's ability to do the same or cause harm to others. These sorts of persuasive arguments for or against religious beliefs are disingenuous and are a product of ulterior motives.

But as far as we've come as a species, we still share many things with our ancestors. Our primal instincts are at the core of why humans tend to make these existential proofs in the first place. In "The Cognitive Psychology of Belief in the Supernatural," Jesse Bering claims that existential beliefs are simply a "by-product of people's ability to reason about the minds of others" (142). What sets humans apart from other animals is their ability to recognize that other beings are conscious as well. This is known as "theory of mind." This impulse is what allowed humans to work together as a species, survive, and thrive. A side effect of this is that we are "biased" to ourselves in a way. We project the human image onto non-human things. We see human faces where there are none, we talk to animals like they're our babies, and we project our human image onto the universe itself and assume that there must be some greater mind to have created our own minds.

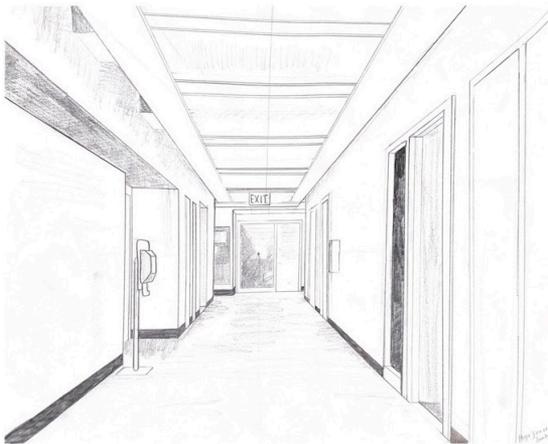
Another factor that contributes to the phenomenon of our beliefs is the fear of the unknown. We will do every thing we can to eliminate anything we are unsure about, but sometimes that leads our brains to fill in the details for us. We might accept that there is life after death and that our fragile bodies are simply vessels for our immortal spirits. There is nothing wrong with believing in these things, but it is worth examining how this behavior may arise from our very nature. Nevertheless, it would be impossible to develop a pure proof for the existence of God because our reasoning is tainted by our human nature and our fear of the unknown, but by that reasoning it would be impossible to have a pure proof for anything, which is why it is important to be skeptical and to question things you are told to blindly believe in.

Whether you are a believer of God or not, you are entitled to that belief, and nobody is in a position to take that away from you. Have faith in your existential beliefs, not because someone told you to, but because they are true to you. And at the same time, be open minded to what other people believe. Humans are not perfect, and we're all human, so there is a non-zero chance that we're all wrong about everything, so it is in your best interest to consider what other people have to say and to not ignore things that don't align

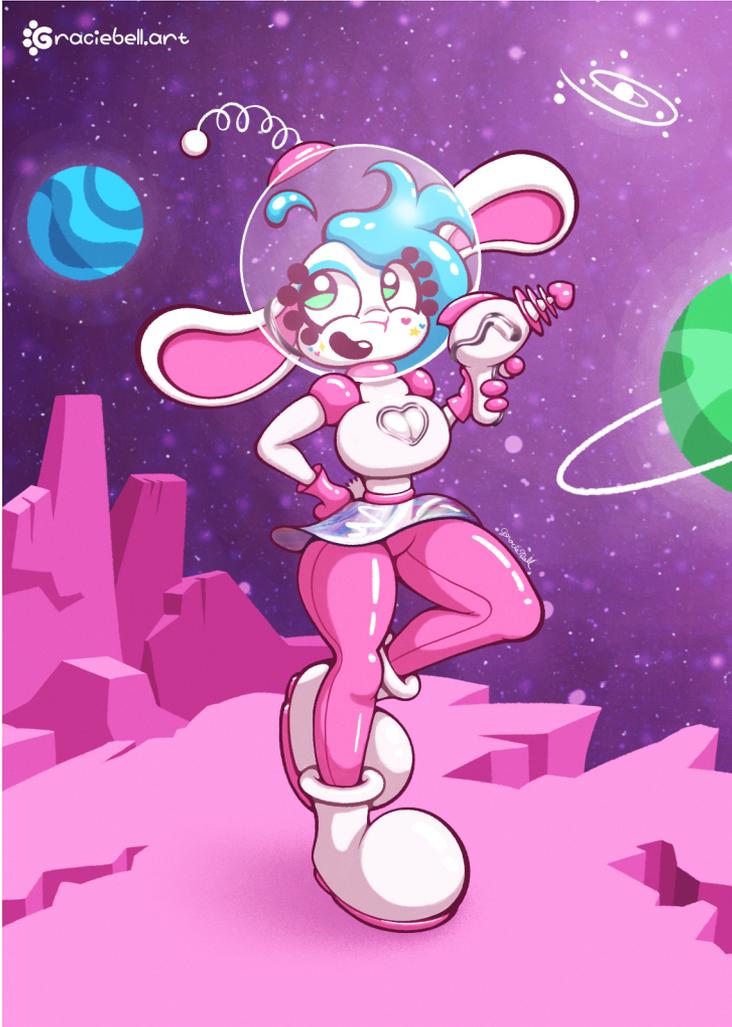
with your views. We're all on this journey together, so it only makes sense that we help each other and show respect to one another, for the good of everyone.

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Perspective Drawing Outside of Lecture Hall
Hugo Juarez Avalos



Space Commander Grace
Grace Meade-Esvang



Van Gracie
Grace Meade-Esvang

¡Oh! Tierra Mía

Ian Valencia

¡Oh! Tierra Mía
(¡Oh! Land of Mine)

Ever since I left you, I haven't forgotten you
¿You do still recognize me tierra mía?
I'm just one of your million sons that had to leave you for a better
life

I will share the truth with you, I must confess that even though
better opportunities had emerged, I still miss you tierra mia.

¡Oh! Tierra Mía

Being away from you is not an easy chore
I don't speak your language anymore, sometimes I feel like a new
culture is taking on me
Pero cuando estoy contigo tu viento aun me acaricia
But when I'm with you your wind still caresses me)

¡Oh! Tierra Mía, ¿how wonderful are you?

That even though, after death, you still allow us to share the most
beautiful melancholy with the people that we loved the most when
they were here

"Entre flores nos reciben y entre ellas nos despiden"
"Among flowers they receive us and among them, they say goodbye
to us"

¡Oh! Tierra Mía

The night when our people stood up against the Spanish monarchy
Not only a nation was born, but the liberation of the Americas also
began with you

¡Vivan los héroes que nos dieron patria!
(Long live the heroes who gave us our homeland!)

¡Viva México! ¡Viva México! ¡Viva México!
Long Live Mexico! Long Live Mexico! Long Live Mexico!
¡Oh! Tierra Mía

How grateful are we with you for showing us that how precious
equality can be
¡Oh! Tierra Mía

I still remember that characteristic weather of yours
From Tlaloc and his majestic rain and Tonatiuh with his warm
sunlight
To forget our past will be a mistake
Aztecs conquered lands and expanded our legacy throughout the
Americas
Emiliano Zapata fought for the proletarians
Lazaro Cardenas and the oil expropriation
Benito Juarez “El Benemerito de las Américas” (Meritorious of the
Americas)
That same president from indigenous roots that stopped the
French oppression
“El respeto a el derecho ajeno es la paz”
(Peace is the respect of other’s rights)

¡Oh! Tierra Mía

I might be far away from you but I still carry you in my blood
I still represent your values, the same values that Los Insurgentes
forged
I stand for what is right and wrong, what should be and should not
be

¡Oh! Tierra Mía

Mi amor por ti jamás se desvanecerá y continuará como la noción
del tiempo
(My love for you will never fade and will continue like the notion of
time)
Los sentimientos de la nación mantienen mi patria viva

(The feelings of the nation keep my homeland alive)
Cuando la gente no se siente orgulloso de pertenecer a ti,
desapareces tierra mía.

(When people are not proud to belong to you, you disappear, tierra
mía)

Pero no esperes eso de mi, mi legado y mi trabajo duro
mantendrán tu espíritu vivo

(But don't expect that from me, my legacy and my hard work will
keep your spirit alive)

¡Oh! Tierra Mía

A Pesar de que estoy y me tuve que ir
(Even though I'm far away and I had to go)

No te olvidare
(I will not forget you)



Maleku Art
Juliet Her

2AM

Sonia Rivas

No.

Because I already know what you will say
"You are beautiful, smart, and an amazing friend
that deserves more"

But that's the thing, I know it's true.
But what I feel for him is different.

Because when he calls me "love" in the middle
of a normal conversation,
my stomach does a summersault
or when I'm enjoying a movie alone,
I get a text from him because he heard a song
he thought I might like.

The butterflies start to flutter and I get flustered.
I know I have been stuck on this for a year now,
but he makes me smile like there isn't anyone else around
and it's just me and him.

Regardless of the distance,
I would be lying if I said I didn't miss his calls last summer
when we stayed up past 2am
talking on the phone about our favorite books and movies,
completely discarding the phrase I always say,
"Nothing good ever happens after 2a.m."

Now, when he says, 'I love you',
but doesn't mean it the way I mean it,
it sucks, it hurts even. But he cares, and I LOVE that.

There was a time when something good did happen after 2am,
and here I am a year later at 3:30am missing those phone calls.

The effort he used to put into the conversations to make me smile, it's gone now, but to be fair we have grown in different ways since then.

Just the fact that he's still in my life is enough to make me happy. Even if I want more to happen.

So no, please don't say that, don't say that it's surprising. It's not surprising that he decided to move on. It's understandable even.

You're my best friend, it's your job to say that I am amazing, but not today, please.

No.

Five

It used to be big in size when I was five
Now it looks small and yet abandoned
The walls are burnt and deteriorating
And what once was a happy home is now in ruins.

Looking back in time

I still see how what once was a giant pool turned into a chicken coop and the small one next to it became a small house for bunnies.

I now sit at the balcony staring at the night sky in this big city in which i've come to live in years later surprised to see the moon.

Thinking back I could see a million stars.

Yet back then the stars did not seem fascinating,
Back then the stars were just lights
Back then I was five and had no worries
Except if there were going to be pancakes for breakfast.

Now I'm here twelve years later
eighteen years old and staring at the sky
staring at the poorly lit up night sky
hoping it gives me some sort of advice.

Back then I didn't feel alone
back then I wasn't alone
back then I was five and had who I loved
I had the bunnies who I loved.

I now sit in this balcony staring at the night sky
wanting to feel like I did when I was five.
Drowning in sweet memories.



Garden
Rubi Perez

Kingdom of the 6th Race

Jesus Garcia

A long, long time ago there used to be a kingdom of great riches and benevolent people. It was the first Kingdom of mankind, where everyone lived in happiness and without worries. The royal family was composed of King Krishnaw The Great, Queen Moana The Gentle, and their son Prince Isaiah The Brave.

One day, the King had a dream of the most terrifying nature; his kingdom was being attacked and destroyed by a reptilian race. When King Krishnaw woke up that morning he called his son Isaiah:

“My son, I had a dream of the most terrifying nature,” the king said. “Tell me, father, what troubles you?” the prince responded.

“My son, I saw in my dream the most hideous creatures attacking and destroying our beloved land.”

“Tell me father, what can I do to stop your dream from ever coming true?” The prince asked this because every dream a member of the royal family had, good or bad, always came true. And the king responded:

“My son you are prince of this land and someday when your mother and I are dead you will become king, but I have never dreamed anything like this, and I am afraid. These creatures are horrible in nature and they look similar to snakes, but they have arms, hands with four fingers, legs, webbed feet. Their skin is gray and green, with wrinkles all over their faces. My son, it was horrible, these creatures were not only bent on conquering our land. No, they wanted to eliminate our kind, I saw how ruthless they were, and they had no mercy, not even with young children. I saw these creatures tearing apart our children and tossing them all over our land; I saw these hideous creatures ripping the heart out of our soldiers and devouring them.”

The king started crying, then went on:

“Indeed, they are snakes that stand on two feet but are more robust and big in size, they easily double the size of our biggest soldiers. Our soldiers, my son, I saw them all dead, tear to pieces, our soldiers fought with bravery and honor, but in the end, they were no match for this enormous army of creatures.”

Then the prince said to his father one more time, “Father, what can I do to protect our land and our people?”

Then the king with tears in his eyes instructed his son Prince Isaiah the Brave to go find the legendary and lost Elixir of Life so that once found, they could use it to make an army of immortal soldiers, thus preventing the King’s dream from ever coming true.

And so the Prince left his beloved kingdom heading East, because East is where the Elixir was supposed to be. As he advanced, he could not stop himself from admiring and praising how beautiful his kingdom was, but he also remembered the terrible dream that his father told him about. So at times he was happy to remember the kingdom, other times he was afraid, because he remembered that every dream a member of the royal family had, always came to pass. Other times he had flashbacks about his days training to be an honorable warrior with his friend and mentor *Tecton the lion slayer*. As the Prince walked, he watched the trees of every fruit imaginable disappear in the horizon, children playing with each other, soldiers riding horses securing everyone’s safety, the Prince also saw women picking up fruits and hanging wet clothes out in the open so that the rays of the blinding sun could dry them.

The kingdom was peaceful and prosperous, every man had a duty, every woman had a task, and every child had a playmate. As the time passed, flowers withered, the sun darkened, and the rain turned to snow. And with the passing of time, the kingdom slowly turned white with a blanket of snow, and Prince Isaiah could not see his beloved kingdom on the horizon anymore. The journey continued and the prince was cold, wet, and miserable, and the only thing he carried was a bag full of dry bread and the kingdom’s

royal sword, which was called the Sword of the Ancients.

And, as the Prince kept walking, he often asked himself if he would ever see the kingdom again, he knew that this adventurous journey could be a one way ticket only. But prince Isaiah was determined to complete his quest because he knew if he did not find the elixir of life, his father's dream would come to pass. The prince used to say to himself "I will find the pool of the Elixir of Life or I will die trying." More time passed and he got close to the Titan, a mountain of fire, in which a lot of brave men and women before him attempted to cross but died trying. Prince Isaiah knew this, he knew in his heart that he had to cross it in order to save his parents and everyone in the kingdom.

So, as he got near the Titan, he could feel the air becoming warmer and warmer to the point that he could barely breathe, he felt that he was standing at the entrance of Hell itself. As the Prince kept walking, he heard a voice whispering in the air, and as he got near the mountain the voice got louder. The voice said, "Isaiah, Isaiah." Then again, "Isaiah, Isaiah, prince of the kingdom of men."

"Who is there?" The Prince asked.

"I am Ayana the Guardian of the Elixir of Life," a voice responded.

"Ayana, I know that name," the Prince thought. "Ayana is the Guardian of the Elixir of Life and she knows I'm coming to get it." Suddenly, the Prince forgot about the scorching heat, and he started to have memories about his childhood in the royal palace, he remembered a conversation he had with the oldest of the royal maids, the maid's name was Tulisa. The Prince remembered Tulisa, the slender middle-aged maid, telling him a story. The story was about a lost magical pool of liquid silver and gold, located somewhere in the Far East.

The Prince was now remembering Tulisa saying to him:

"My beloved Prince Isaiah, ever since the creation of the world



Velma Pepper
Grace Meade-Esvang

there has been a magical place, with a pool of liquid gold and silver, and if someday somebody finds it, that somebody can use it to create immortal beings.”

Then the Prince asked:

“Tulisa, I love you like I love my own mother, can anybody find the pool?”

Then Tulisa answered the Prince’s question with a calm voice:

“Isaiah my Prince, I love you as if you were my own son, but no, my Prince, not just anybody can find the pool, it has to be someone with a pure heart, someone like you, Isaiah.”

“Like me?” the Prince asked.

“Your heart is pur, my Prince. There is no evil within you, and I hope evil will never take possession of you.”

Tulisa then continued:

“Listen, Isaiah, the pool of liquid silver and gold is the Elixir of Life, and it does have a Guardian and her name is Ayana. Ever since creation, brave men and women ventured out trying to find it, but nobody has ever made it back home. It is said that the way to the east is the most dangerous place in the world.”

Suddenly, the Prince’s thoughts stopped. He didn’t realize he had finally crossed the Titan; for a moment, he thought it was Tulisa’s own ghost cooling him down as he walked across the Titan.

Another day passed, and the Prince took a well-deserved break under a tree alongside a river. As the prince slept, he heard a familiar voice calling his name again. “Isaiah, Isaiah, Prince of the kingdom of men, get up for this is no time to rest, a challenge awaits you.” The prince woke up and just as he was grabbing his sword from its scabbard, a big black wolf, as tall as the Prince, appeared from the darkness. The wolf and the Prince locked their eyes on each other for a split second, waiting for the other to make the first move. It was only for a few seconds that the wolf and the

Prince stared at each other, but it seemed that it lasted a very long time. Then, suddenly, the wolf charged towards Prince Isaiah, but the Prince was much smarter and he knew that he had only one chance to kill the wolf, so he gripped his sword with both hands and swung it from left to right in a split second and cut the wolf's head off its body. And so it was over; the wolf was dead and the Prince took his time to clean his face of the wolf's warm blood. After the prince finished cleaning his face, he took his sword and cleaned it, and while he cleaned it, he remembered Tecton saying.

“Isaiah, young prince, your sword is special. It is the last of its kind, it was forged by angels when they came from the stars. So every time you use it, you should clean it. Legend has it that this sword will someday save our people.”

And so the journey continued. The Prince did not realize it had been months since he left his home. The snow melted and flowers blossomed, and he finally ate some wild berries he always wanted to eat. Time passed and his beard and hair grew, and he almost forgot the purpose of his journey until a familiar voice echoed from the east. It was Ayana the Guardian calling the Prince with her angelic voice.

Ayana said. “Isaiah son of the great kings, follow my voice and I will show you what you are looking for.” Then a big snake appeared in front of the Prince, the snake had its mouth wide open ready to devour Prince Isaiah, but the Prince with no time to waste killed the snake with a single swing of his sword. It was all very fast and the Guardian congratulated the Prince for his bravery.

After the Guardian's voice had finished congratulating the Prince she cast a spell and immediately transported him to the fountain of the Elixir of Life, the Prince could not believe what he was seeing, after a torturous journey he was finally there in front of the pool of the Elixir of Life, the pool was beautifully gold and silver just like Tulisa described it when the Prince was a child, and the pool was so bright that it rivaled the sun's rays on a clear summer's day.

“Amazing isn’t?” the Guardian said.

“It is” said the Prince.” “How long has it been here?”

“Countless eons, all I remember is that one day I was created and appeared in front of the pool of the elixir of life, and a voice said to me, “Ayana shall be your name from now to eternity.” I also remember the voice saying to me, “Ayana you are the protector of the pool of the elixir of life, countless warriors will attempt to conquer it, but only one will reach it.” The Prince listened without making a move, as if he was frozen like a mighty giant statue at the entrance of the kingdom.

Ayana spoke again: “Young prince of the Kingdom of Men, the pool of the elixir of life is both found and earned.” “Listen, your Majesty, the pool of the elixir of life is not bound by your understanding of time and space; it is located in its own pocket dimension, that is why I had to transport you here when you finished your test.” “Test?” The Prince asked.

“Yes, your majesty. A test; only the worthy and pure of heart without evil can enter this place,” young and brave prince Ayana said. It has been written since the time of creation that only one pure of heart and without evil is to enter this sacred place. In that moment prince Isaiah remembered long stories about creation he had heard many times from Tulisa, the royal maid. The prince remembered in detail how Tulisa told the story.

In the beginning, there was emptiness without light, an unending void of nothingness in which only the Creator existed needing nothing but Himself. But the creator, full of love and warmth, imagined a universe full of light and life. Galaxies emerged, planets were created, and the Earth was born and it was good, beautiful and fragile, full of water to sustain life. Then the angels were created, beings of light to guard creation and watch over the Earth.

Then the earth needed days and nights to balance a fragile life, and time was created to divide days and nights, twelve hours for a

day and twelve hours for a night and both complete one cycle, and it was beautiful and it was good. And it came pass that four great races were created, the immortal Elves, the Dwarfs that create machinery and are long lived up to 5,000 years, the Magi whose wisdom is ever expanding and are long lived up to 3,000 years, and Men that lived up to 1,000 years or less because they get sick and die.

Then the Prince asked Tulusa why Mankind only lives 1,000 or less and also asked about the Demons and why there was no mention in creation, and she responded: “ My young Isaiah, the reason why Mankind only lives 1,000 years or less is because that’s the way we were created, only the Creator knows why he created Mankind this way, maybe because in weakness is where we find strength to fight and survived, even the immortal Elves have a saying, *“in weakness and sickness is what makes Mankind strong because in the sixth day of creation the Creator proclaimed it so.”* “See, my prince, we do not know why, maybe we’ll know when we die and face the judgment for the bad things we did in life, or perhaps we are not supposed to know. Then the prince asked, “What do you mean we are not supposed to know?” Tulusa responded that there are things in creation that are not for us to know, we do not know when we are going to die, we only know that we are going to die someday. Just like we do not know what tomorrow is going to bring we can only guess but we will never know.

Think about the royal family, my prince, ever since the kingdom was established the dreams of the royal family always come to pass, that is not predicting the future my young lad, the dreams are only a vision of something that has to happen without knowing the outcome of what is to come. As for the demons and why they are not created is because they are people like you and I and like the other races of this beautiful and fragile world, what I mean is this, the demons are corrupted beings, in the beginning of creation when Man, Elves, Magi and Dwarfs lived in harmony, members of four races become corrupted and prideful and because of that they became demons, and the angels banished them to hell to prevent more corruption. See, in the beginning nothing is corrupted or evil,

it is us who become corrupt or evil. Remember this, my young Prince. In creation everything is good. After remembering his time with the royal maid, prince Isaiah again heard the angelic voice of the Guardian saying to him that the pool of the elixir of life was the first thing created by the Creator and that the prince was destined for something big, and then she said.

“Turn around Prince and face me”, Ayana ordered the Prince.

As the Prince slowly turned to face the Guardian he was stunned by how beautiful she was, the Prince was now face to face with the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, he could see she was dressed with a white robe hanging all the way to her bare feet, the Guardian had long black hair all the way to her waist, she had fair skin and her eyes were blue.

Then the Guardian said, “Your majesty, well done! You have achieved the impossible! You have reached your destiny.”

The Prince, confused, asked, “What is my destiny?”

Ayana the Guardian responded, “You saved your father’s kingdom. Your father’s dream will come to pass but in a different way. Your family is safe, an army of immortal soldiers are battling the reptiles as we speak and thanks to your bravery, your race, the human race, has now a secure place in the council of the five races.”

“Before you ask, Prince, the council of the five races is made up of the Elves of the Kingdom of the West, the Angels from the Kingdom of the Stars, the Demons from the Kingdom of Hell, the Dwarfs from the Mountains of the South, and the Magi from the Frozen Glaciers of the North. After all this, it shall from now on be called the Council of the Six Races; the human race has a rightful place on the council now.”

The Prince was amazed at what he had done for his people, but he also knew he had a lot of questions for the Guardian. He had questions about the existence of all the races, so he stayed with the Guardian, and eventually Ayana answered the Prince’s questions.

And time passed, and the Prince knew he would not return home anymore. Prince Isaiah and Ayana the Guardian fell in love and together they journeyed to a new adventure.

Back at the kingdom everyone cheered the kingdom's victory, except the King and Queen, for their son did not return. Time passed and the King and Queen got older, until one day their beloved son and Ayana the Guardian appeared before them and Isaiah said to his parents:.

“Your majesties, it’s been too long. I have returned, for a great tribulation is coming upon the world.”



Arenal Volcano

Juliet Her

You

Yailyn Flores Vazquez

You Tito
You who I most love
You who most loves me
You who showed me the
meaning of love
You my first love
You who takes care of me

I make this verse
To show you my gratitude
To show you my respect
You who took care of me
Every night when I was sick
You who feed me
Every time I was hungry
You who took me to the store
Every time I wanted a snack
You who took my hand
To make me feel guarded
You who took me to the park
So I could have fun
You who bought me a pool
So I could swim when I
wanted
You who listened
Every time I needed it
You who advised me
When I felt lost
You who made me smile
When I was depressed

You stay in Mexico
I cross the border
Us being apart
You get sick

I can't take care of you
Us being apart
You can't walk anymore
I feel hopeless
Us being apart
You tell me you want me to
be happy

I love you more every second
Us being apart
You passed away
I am miserable
Us being apart
You are laying down in a box
I am so far away from you
You seem sleep
I see you through the screen
You being the best grandpa
ever
I cry desperately
You giving me your life
to take care of my life
I couldn't take care of your
life
Us being apart

I will never hug you again
I will never see you again
I feel devastated
I feel infuriated
I am blazing
I am suffering
A pain so hard to describe
A pain I never felt before

All I wanted
Was to be by your side
As you once
Were by my side
Dear Abuelito
You who I most love
You who I couldn't say
goodbye to

You who I watch through the
screen
You who I appreciate
You who I admire
You who I need
You who loved me
You my angel
who will remain in my heart

I will always love you.
Descansa en paz mi
adoracion.



Close Your Eyes

"DC"

Close your eyes,
breathe
Your heart may be broken
but it will not freeze
True love will thaw
all the pain and hurt.

Close your eyes,
believe.
Feels like you'll be forever alone
but you won't, just wait & see
The right one is out there
waiting for you to come home

Close your eyes,
dream
Don't be afraid to hope
the world is not as dark as it seems
Your smile will return again,
It just may not be today.

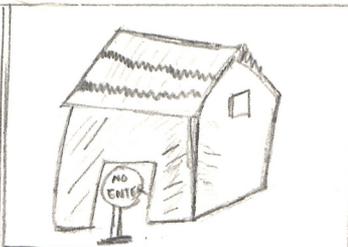
Close your eyes,
breathe, believe, dream
I promise, your other will set you free.



My Social Class

Manju Mangar





"you're not allowed to enter my house" I can read the loud phrase screaming through the facial expressions of my friend's parents.

I call my friend by the banana tree in front of her house to have a chat.

Asmita, I forgot I have to help my mom cook and get water from the tap today. I will see you at school.



okay, Manju see you at school -tomorrow- then.

Without thinking too much I run all the way home.



I directly go to my bedroom.

I lie down without changing my school uniform



My friend belongs to the high caste, and her parents do not allow me to enter their house. This made me sad.



I lied to my friend saying I have something to do at home, but how could she know that I wasn't allowed in?

2

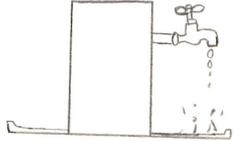


fast forward to today. As I sit on the floor with my back against the sofa, I have



an epiphany.

wow, really? I went through the discrimination of low caste at a such age! *GASP* there was another incident that happen to me which I remember now



There is one tap water for each sector. Middle and low caste families must allow high caste families to get the water first from the tap water.



I turn is almost come

I am waiting for my turn and the girl with the red dress, she belongs to a high caste family.



While, I walking toward the tap water



My hand accidentally touches the outside surface of a red dressed girl's water pot and she gets so mad. It is a sin to touch any belongings of high caste people.

"How dare you touch my water pot, you made my whole water dirty. Now I have to clean it up and I need to fill my water pot again." Because of You



"I see" Angry eyes looking at me.



Then.....

4



I can't say anything and I better zip my mouth while that is ^{the} worst one of my day.

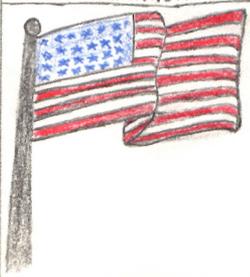
She is so loud that she doesn't need any radio mics. ^{मि}



As time passes, things are getting better. I believe many Nepali people do not follow a high and low caste mindset. However, there are a few people who continue to follow this type of discrimination.

MY FAMILY AND I FEEL COMFORTABLE LIVING HERE AS PART OF THE SOCIETY.

Now I am in the United States. It's been a long time since I have experienced this type of discrimination.



Candle

Aadesh Biswa

Our friendship stood tall on the kitchen table
Lit bright with the body of white that was stainless
Felt so confident of this source of light, never knew I'd need a
band-aid
Especially when the rush of the storm came and didn't blow the
fire away
But our tear caught a speck of small dirt that ruined the snow-
white candle's look
I thought it still looked ok, but why did you feel the need to pinch
our light away?
Because now you are bruised and I'm freezing in this frame day-
to-day



Fennec on a Bench
Grace Meade-Esvang

Soul Shattering

Aadesh Biswa

It took me a while to throw my penny in the well
Giving up my treasure for a magical wish
was nonsense
But intertwined in time, we came face to face
And somewhere in the world celebration began

For your comfort, I became your ice cream friend
Deep talks on summer nights were whispered
Our tears and laughter were forever made to be remembered
This friendship was remarkably sweetened

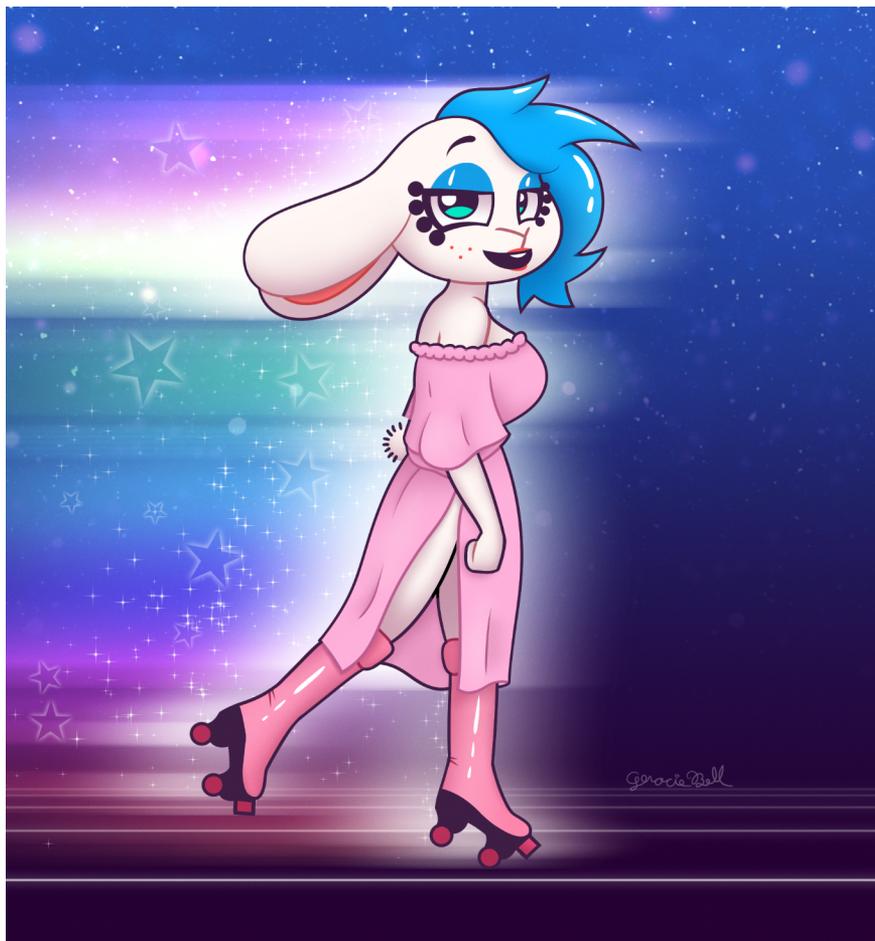
We grew to become our personalized telepath
For we created a language only we could understand
Sharing tears, our shoulder soon became the solace place
Not a lover, but much more than that- we were soul mates.

You were the first to see all of my drafts
Because all of your thoughts were treasured in my past
Our vision and dreams seem to perfectly align
What else can I say, we were the ultimate friendship goal.

Life intervened and the perfect summer came to an end
But even when we were separated in hundreds of miles
I had to make sure my wish stayed a little awhile
Unfortunately, now I know it was only a matter of time.

Your friends from the past made a conclusion on my name
I knew you'd understand my language, so we came face-to-face
But shattering my dreams, you left me speechless.
You believed everyone in the world but concealed me away.

Disastrously, you were so quick to ghost me
Your words now amplify to hunt me
I feel like my own shadow has left me.
You were my soul mate; how could you have not known me?



Gracie in Xanadu
Grace Meade-Esvang



Fame Art Whirlwind
Melissa Garcia

Blue Heart

Aadesh Biswa

Friendship is a game that you need to play smart
Or else you'll feel blue every time your friends depart
In time, your heart will understand it's an art
And don't worry too much; you'll get another fresh start.

Mirror on the Wall

Aadesh Biswa

Looking in your eyes, I become fragile
For you look your best, when you face me
Don't let me fall into your heart
Cause if you leave me, I'll shatter
The blood will be on your hands, no matter.
I matter, even if I'm fragile

-inspired by Laufey's Fragile

Thank you

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