

HOW THE ART OF POETRY INTERSECTS WITH FINDING ONESELF

Eknoor Sethi

ENG-W 403: Advanced Poetry

May 2, 2023

being alive

each day feels the same with the same time to wake up and snooze and the same rushing out the door to the same classes about how business works and meetings about how i can change the lives of people at this school and the same irritating people complaining about how my research for strategic management is lacking depth or how i've miraculously been accused of saying that my colleague in student government is dead weight when i literally didn't say that and we all know who was spreading those lies (but shall remain unnamed) or whatever the fuck else and the same deep breaths to keep calm even though they don't work and the same getting home close to midnight and not even having enough time to eat 2-minute ramen because getting the dishes out and boiling the water and then eating the ramen and washing the dishes after i'm done doesn't really take just 2 minutes in total and the same not having an ounce of energy as i'm feeling my body go numb and the same crashing on my bed just to start all over again

Q&A with my beloved 9-year-old sister

Q: do you know about love?

A: yes, but what about it?

Q: like, not the family kind. the one where you find someone and then you get married

A: i know a little bit about that one. what do you want to know?

Q: is it forever?

A: i like to think it's unconditional

Q: are you sure?

A: i hope

Q: how do you know when you're in love?

A: well, when you can sit together while not saying a word and still feel happy

Q: what does it feel like?

A: kind of like you can feel them just by looking into their eyes

Q: how can you feel them if they're not touching you?

A: through your energies, the vibrations collide

Q: what do you mean by energies colliding?

A: it's like your souls are intertwined like they knew they were supposed to be with each other. kind of like how vines get stuck together on old buildings or how my hair gets after a good night's sleep

Q: do you finish each other's sentences like Ana and Hans from *Frozen* before he was evil?

A: sometimes! but, it's more like how blue and orange are on opposite ends of the color wheel but perfectly complement each other when they're paired together

Q: oh, that's cool. do you think i'll feel that love one day?

A: i know you will. but just know that i'll always love you the most

so, yesterday

they asked me how i was and i said im fine im fine im fine yes, im fine and then, get this, i went on with my day and so did they because they didnt *really* care. but, im fine im fine im fine yes, im fine and then i went home and made myself a lavish dinner but actually, it was just some average ass pesto pasta that i hyperfixated on for, like, a month straight and then i kind of wanted to drink a glass of red wine, no, actually take a shot because i hate all kinds of wine, but i didnt because i controlled myself, arent you proud? arent you proud of me? yes, you. im looking you straight in your dirt brown eyes in this foggy ass mirror that i swore i was gonna windex today but i lost track of time. but, arent you proud of me for not falling into the trap of resorting to drinking so it would numb my pain because i want drinking to be fun and not a habit? and im fine im fine im fine, yes, im fine and then i watched a movie or maybe it was a tv show but i dont quite remember because that's all a blur but, yessssssssss, im fine im fine im fine and then i brushed my teeth but, are you ready to get super real? i brushed my tongue a little too hard and made myself gag by accident but then i finally felt something i felt something a little thing just one thing i felt weird and i felt uncomfortable but i felt like i kind of liked it. okay, maybe i didnt do it by accident and it was on purpose because i wanted to make sure that i was still a real person and not just a shell of one. i coughed and my eyes watered mixed with real tears and from gagging and i realized i actually did it on purpose but i finally felt something after i felt like i maybe couldnt feel anything at all. was that too real for you?

this is an Ars Poetica, apparently.

i think i've been conditioned to believe
as a poet, i must write about
things that hurt me and wait for
the times in which i'm suffering.

but i disagree, since as a poet,
i can't turn my poet-ness off
as it's an art form in which i'm
constantly painting with words in my head.

i write to let myself feel the emotions
i may be suppressing through endlessly
facing my computer and not having
enough hours in the day to think.

i write to let my words flow,
just letting myself clear my mind
and i take my time to write about
the beauty that lies in life and nature.

yes, i do write about the moon
and how she brings me comfort
and i do write about my shared love
and how it brings me such joy.

i don't drink black coffee
or take part in pretentious conversations
or snap my fingers in dimly lit rooms
while i listen to people slam.

i do consider me a poet,
an artist, if you will,
as i just write to write
and don't think much about it.