

EXOUSIA

A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE





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EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

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FORWARD

It is really amazing how literature has a way of opening doors for limitless imagination allowing our intellect to grow by perceiving so many ideas and help us express these through words and art. This e-book initiated by the Department of English, Tetso College is an ideal platform for the students and the faculty of the college to think, feel and be innovative while broadening their horizons.

This e-book is a collection of Poetry, Short stories, Art and Photography showcasing the creativity and originality of each contributor. The themes that appear in this book are an amalgamation about life, love, nature and the rich culture and tradition of the Nagas. It is astonishing to see young minds indulging in innovative ways of creative writing giving them a chance to think freely, imagine and experiment with the essence of human nature and with situation as they find themselves in this world.

I would like to congratulate the Department of English, Tetso college for taking such a commendable initiative in bringing out this fantastic e-book which is not only a brilliant work for pleasurable reading but it also contributes in the field of academics.

Tatongkala
HOD, Department of History
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PREFACE

With the publication of its first issue in 2014, the e-book version of A Tetso College Anthology of Art and Literature has since produced aspiring artist in the domain of Poetry, Short Story, Art and Photography. The third issue of the e-book named Exousia continues to create art.

Exousia, an E-book, is an Anthology of Art and Literature, published by the Department of English, Tetso College. It comprises of Poems, Short Stories, Sketches, Paintings and Photography contributed by the faculty and students of Tetso College.

Exousia is a Greek word which is translated as “Authority” or “Power”. It implies jurisdiction or dominion over a certain realm, right, privilege or ability. Over the centuries, the human mind has tried to understand and assert its authority over the several aspects of humanity and has aspired to capture the beauty of God’s creation. In all the beauty that surrounds us, issues of discrimination, rights, privileges and class distinction has always haunted the human race.

This e-book contains confessional poems, poems of prayer for the future generation and works of art depicting emotions and the harsh realities of life. The contributors have also tried to capture the beauty that surrounds humanity, which are often overlooked and forgotten. Through this e-book we would like to touch on the themes of women empowerment and the power of a creative mind.

Editors

Contents

Forward.....	Page 04
Preface.....	Page 05
I Poetry.....	Page 11-120
1. The Shattered world of her.....	Page 11
Rhilo Mero	
2. A Confession of Defeat.....	Page 14
Yekili Cheryl Zhimo	
3. Letting Go.....	Page 16
Anjan K Behera	
4. Canzoni d' amore.....	Page 19
Dr. Salikyu Sangtam	
5. Canvas.....	Page 20
Vinika Chishi	
6. Solace.....	Page 24
Nungshijungla Tzudir	
7. A Prayer for My Son.....	Page 25
Akabo Awomi	
8. Time.....	Page 27
Winsome Sitlhou	
9. To My Delilah.....	Page 29
Vethilu Khusoh	
10. Prayer for My Child.....	Page 32
Mereninla Jamir	
11. Aria of the Lark.....	Page 37
Dr. Salikyu Sangtam	
12. The Fact of My Life.....	Page 38
Likupu	

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

13. Till the End.....	Page 40
Juni W Sumi	
14. A Girl Child.....	Page 41
Yanbeni	
15. Ode to My Mom.....	Page 43
Takotemsu	
16. A Prayer to My Daughter.....	Page 44
Ayusanen	
17. The Unseen Beauty.....	Page 47
Tokavi	
18. My Blue Dress.....	Page 48
Yiboni Humtsoe	
19. Turning 20.....	Page 50
Vini H Aye	
20. My Second Home.....	Page 52
Lidia Venyo	
21. Prayer for My Son.....	Page 54
Bendangyula Jamir	
22. Daughter's Longing.....	Page 58
Linokali Sumi	
23. Waiting for Love.....	Page 60
Lito K Zhimomi	
24. Our Life.....	Page 63
Kato Achumi	
25. Melancholic Melody.....	Page 65
Avikali Tuccu	
26. Dignity of Labour.....	Page 67
Bwenyhunle Kath	
27. The Unforgiven.....	Page 69
Alino K Chishi	
28. Ode to My Mother.....	Page 71

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

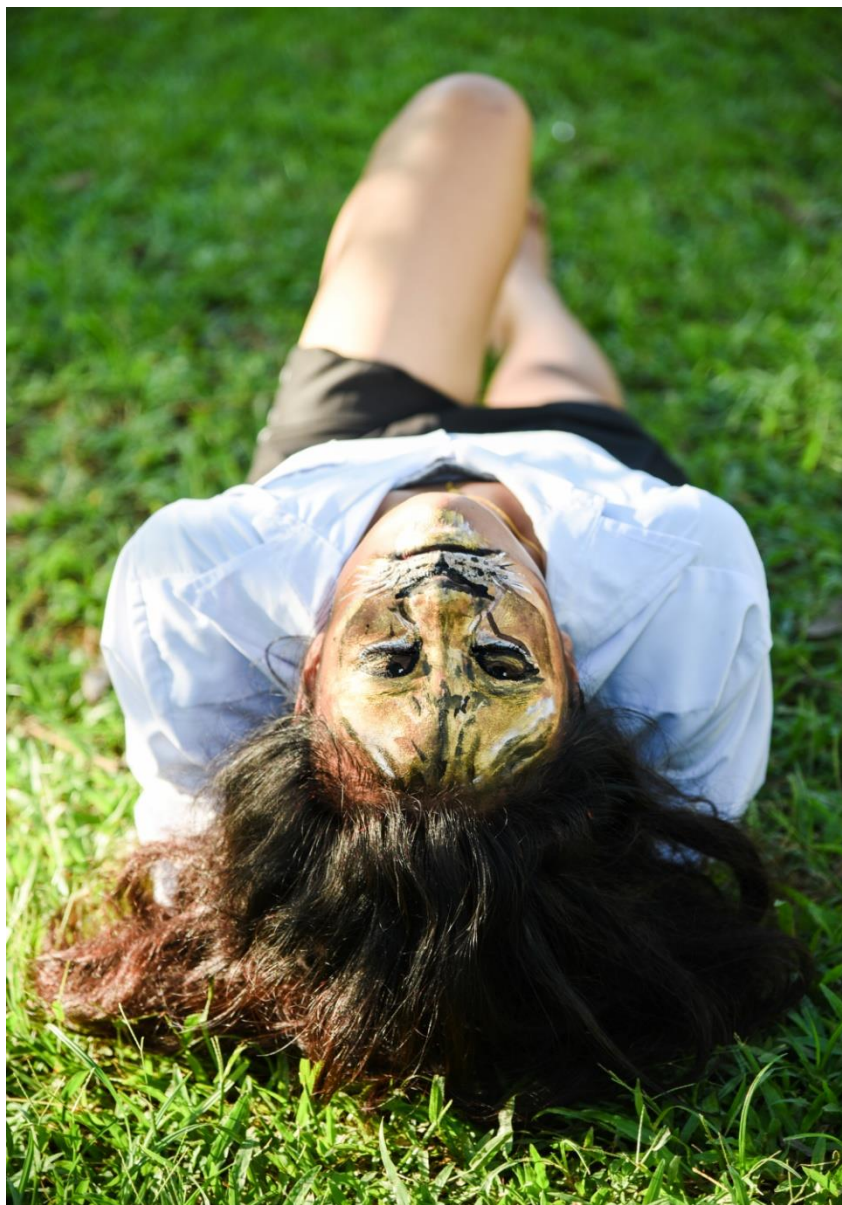
Yenbeni Humtsoe	
29. Lost and Found.....	Page 72
Vinika Chishi	
30. Forbidden; the Untold Story.....	Page 76
Vini H Aye	
31. Longing.....	Page 78
Dr. Salikyu Sangtam	
32. Blinded Soul.....	Page 79
Nungshijungla Tzudir	
33. A Prayer for My Son.....	Page 80
Vinika Chishi	
34. Away from Home.....	Page 83
Alibo Awomi	
35. Serving Life's Purpose.....	Page 84
Likupu	
36. Soldier's of the Wind.....	Page 86
Viboli Achumi	
37. Deep.....	Page 88
Yhunchule Kent	
38. Memories of First Love.....	Page 92
Ayusanen	
39. Unseen Love.....	Page 94
Linokali Sumi	
40. Promise is for Keeps.....	Page 96
S Lika Sumi	
41. Abhor.....	Page 98
Shenili Chishi	
42. One Decision, One Happiness.....	Page 99
Mhalesieno Kere	
43. Hope.....	Page 101
Narosangla T	

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

44. Bond of a Sister.....	Page 103
Bendangyula Jamir	
45. The Longing to Call.....	Page 104
Bwenyhunle Kath	
46. Emptiness.....	Page 106
Lidia Vinyo	
47. To My Love.....	Page 108
Surotsala Y Sangtam	
48. A Prayer to My Daughter.....	Page 109
Inaholi Shohe	
49. For You, My Child.....	Page 112
Vini H Aye	
50. Love's Secrets.....	Page 115
Dr. Salikyu Sangtam	
51. Think of Me.....	Page 117
Rhilo Mero	
52. I am, Every Woman.....	Page 119
Kahor Raleng	
II Short Stories.....	Page 121-55
1. Love Letters to the Lady in Red.....	Page 122-27
Vizolie Khatsu	
2. Latent Emotion.....	Page 128-53
Tsukhamla	
3. A Mother's Vision beyond Keats's Negative Capability....	Page 154-55
Dr. Nonlih Chohwanglim	
III Photography.....	Page 156-64
IV Art.....	Page 165-69

POETRY

Poetry is a mode of artistic expression in the verse form. The origin of poetry is Greek. It is a verb which means "to make, to create". Poetry evokes emotions and the latent feelings of the poet as well as the reader. This section contains poems on women, love, hope and prayer for the child to be born.



THE SHATTERED WORLD OF HER

Rhilo Mero,
BA 4th Semester

Unreasonable expectations of a doubtful Mother,
To her only reasonable Daughter,
Sometimes too much, ending with a burden;
For her, that is certain.

Insecurities of an insecure Father,
Afraid of losing her to the cruel world,
Over-protective of his 'moon and stars',
That she would never be let out.

While her loving brother
Who always bothers to check in on her.
Of what she does, or who she's with,
(No room for privacy she feels)
Over concern of how she is,
About what; how her love-life is,

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Somewhere down the line of the society,
Creating ideals, those 'ideal' women,
Asking her 'to behave proper',
'To dress proper', 'to live proper',
As 'to avoid any trouble' it seems,
To a world of lost dreams.

All these norms and its chains,
With Old Customs and Traditions,
For a girl to be a woman,
Are just mere fallacies,
And made of exaggerations,
By the prejudices of our species.

How can she but live?
To expectations beyond her reach,
When confined to the four walls,
She stays bound in chains
Mentally, physically, spiritually, emotionally.

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Thoughts of protest, feeble though,
Race through her mind so stormy.
She stands upon this high mountain,
Screaming of these injustices.
Yet no one can hear her;
Perhaps, she is too far from our hearing
Or maybe we listen, but dutifully ignore.

Her pain, her tears, her cries, her joys,
Her bad times, and her few good ones.
No matter what it is,
Isn't She still a part of us?
Now let us wear her shoes
And 'walk a mile in it'
Just to see how she battles on.

A CONFESSION OF DEFEAT

Yekili Cheryl Zhimo

BA 4th Semester

How dull of me to capture symphonies,
Of long lost summery halcyon days.
Nuances and poses; the phonies.
All mere pretentions! I grin, as I tread over the grays.

There is no Elysium, no Seraglio.
Only a glade of bruises for the woebegone
Where the crisp, rustling, fallen of shades murmur in hushes
“When all is said and done, you will be born of the ashes.”

Maybe it was just an ignorant monde green
Of drugged visions and false epiphanies.
Oh! Please don't patronize me,
Or my hopes of stumbling on serendipity!

In ineffable cry and failure called me shallow
Another day? I'd rather not, I'd rather not.
Curses, charades and I finally chose the swallow

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Pain, pills and all, an ingénue eternally left to rot.

Benumbed by a nasty smile, a petty pirate of emotions

To the stage I'd bid adieu, hearty with a kiss!

For the lofty price paid just to be heard in different notions

I do not wish to defy history, my nemesis

Nothing but a coward, afraid to take a stand.

True honesty, madness, to be damned!

Games of pretend and illusions I'd rather play,

Dancing with ebullience in my make-believe hurricane.

Letting Go!

Anjan K Behera

Asst Professor, Dept of English

How quickly do days turn dark,

And hope retreats afar.

How swift do the petals drop,

As my tears mimic their move.

I silently watch the spectre,

The setting sun, the flying birds,

My mind sees it all in grey;

Even the roses wet with splendor.

A firm grasp of the window rails,

And drunken senses evoke you;

The radiance in your eyes,

My heart remembers the warmth.

I reminisce those rainy nights,

When huddled under an umbrella,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

We'd walk, not caring to speed.

And intoxicated shadows hovered around.

You say he makes you happy,

A smile compels my lips.

Inside, a storm starts to brew,

Which shall remain within.

Foolish as Icarus, I chose the wrong,

And diverted my soul with might.

Justice it was, I soon realized,

That thorny became my life.

Your joyous laughter today,

Both stabs and soothes me.

This new tale of love intrigues,

Knowing happy endings exist.

I spy you riding off with him,

To the promised land I'll yearn.

Prayers escape my lips,

May you forever happy be.

A memory sustains my breath,
Of us, intertwined in passion.
When I looked into your eyes,
And saw what I will now forever crave.

Canzoni d'amore

Salikyu Sangtam, Ph.D.

Asst Professor, Dept of Political Science

The Nightingales refuse to serenade

The Royal courtyards; the Roses

Shy away to bloom their

Opalescent petals; the Daffodils

Blush; and the Peacocks decline

To flaunt their iridescence feathers.

All these they do in the

Presence of your beauty.

The Garden of Kings comes

To you and adulate the

Splendour that is the

Paragon of Heavens and the

Beauty of the Venus.

CANVAS

Vinika Chishi

BA 4th Semester

The rich golden hue of the clouds
Creates a heavenly glow that marvels.
Above the earth are wonders renounced;
Display of art for every spectator.
Mirrored and reflected upon the still waters;
An opening of hope at the sun's arrival.

Mountains that reach to the sky;
A place when heaven met the earth.
Clothed with shades of green;
Upholding the sources of life.
Breathe taking are the view one beholds;
For dreams are born when beauty is witnessed.

The oceans sigh for it carries the worries,
Of stories untold, treasures not found.
Full of secrets and mystery, yet,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Undeniable its beauty.

Ah! Overwhelming ecstasy.

Listen to her for she longs to be heard.

Wildflowers are the heart of nature;

For they bloom in its mercy.

Dream of beauty such as poppies;

Innocence is revived in remembrance.

Of lilies pure and white, so appealing;

Every one of them peculiar with integrity.

An orchard dressed in radiance of variety;

The blossoms show off as the wind compliments.

Freedom is in the air for the dandelions;

To tell the world their stories in their stay.

One by one waiting to be taken,

Far, far away where adventure begins.

She danced, twirled and laughed;

A mortal being, an exquisite thing.

Nature was a reflection of her innocence.

Jasmine in her hair, soul of a child,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Her spirit as free as the wind.

Strength, firm like the roots of a tree.

But she withered away, the poor soul.

Like the unforgiving desert dry and harsh,

Hope was faint and death so near.

She was dying, oh! What a fare!

If she could taste the rain, only taste.

Would she remember faith a child has?

A splash of crimson red was thrown.

The color so bold; strong and pure.

It washed the entire scene of the girl,

For the artist just and sure,

Did not like the pile of dirt.

A new beginning to start over.

The brush held once again.

A determined genius set at work,

With a skilful hand, began to create.

Restoration made to the canvas drenched in red;

Past erased, present in the making.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Time will tell what is being created.

If nature could be revived in a thing,

It's beauty expressed in silence when witnessed.

Forget not the price and benefits,

The canvas, the artist so loved.

Evident in every stroke He took,

Will forever and always remain His favorite.

SOLACE

Nungshijungla Tzudir,

BA 2nd Semester

Too afraid of demons, she wrapped herself in blankets of prayers.

Shadowed by darkness, where she saw no hope,

Her life was her own battlefield.

She wore her pain with grace.

Fragile as glass, with every crack having a story of its own.

Melody rhymed with sadness,

A rhythm only she could understand.

She played her own symphony,

And gracefully danced along the sad beat.

At night she counted her scars like the stars above;

In company of the moon, she was a lost star.

She drowned in her own tears,

Hoping for the place beyond the clouds.

She wondered in despair,

Alone and afraid, yet brave enough to fight her fears.

She matched like a soldier;

Beyond seas of grief,

To shores of hope,

Searching her way to the land of happiness.

A Prayer For My Son

Akabo Awomi

BA 4th Semester

Quite a bitter journey of life I've taken,
My fragile conscience often shaken.
My wishes and dreams lay everywhere scatter'd
Would've I lived them had they not been shatter'd

Agonies exhumed; the dead past, resurrected as memories.
No matter, the pain seemed to last, incurring more worries.
So I let the bygones be, and decided to look forth
I scooped a glimpse of my new hope thenceforth.

'Twas not none, but I saw, nothing that be monotony.
'Twas me I saw, reawakened unalloyed into my progeny,
My son it was in whom I saw myself rooted,
Ne'er would I want that turn reckless.

And like a pearl from an oyster's shell,
I will value you above all. A thing too invaluable to sell,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

But anything that's sphere, rolls, as Newton decreed.

A rolling pearl will need a guide. And when you've grown,

I'll help you to not be a rolling stone gathering no moss.

But be a stone gathering the right kind of moss.

And when my cane jolts you, you will feel slighted,

But, you my son like a sheep, short sighted,

Grasp that my cane is but a shepherd's rod.

And I see ahead and guide you towards the right.

TIME

Winsome Sitlhou

BA 2nd semester

So cruel, selfish but not with greed,
You don't, no never think of me;
Second chance I think I need
Also taken far not to see.

You give me few happy cents,
A sack of sorrow and hardship
So I am helpless, full of dents
I, mortal, from my wounds blood drips.

I try to stretch you, my grip tight
But you never look back, Oh Time!
Leaving me with regrets and blight
Just standing, like matching a crime.

Feeling homeless at your feet,
Moving stealthy, taking beauty
With elegance, ticking on beat

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

But cannot fulfil my duty.

The whole world wished and wishes that

You slow down with a pity heart

To be with a close one who had

Unfortunately gone apart.

But no, you will never least wait

Let alone stay for a long hour,

As that is how you have been made

And having the greatest power.

Yet though you cannot favour me

I can make the most of the little,

Like the cripple, glad he can see

I will be not waver and brittle.

Blessed Hope cares to stay by me,

Teaching me to be so careful,

With the present, and also be

One who is mindful and grateful.

To My Delilah

Vethilu Khusoh

BA 4th Semester*Aniepo, a kutso thipu a tsüte,**E anuna cho süyo we.**Aniepo, will I call her Delilah?**As she embraces me with her delicacy,**Her heart beats close to mine.**"My precious love, as you are to born,**I pray, you cling to me and I, him".**Aniepo, bless her with happiness, and wisdom.**May innocence, kindness, care be her wares,**May her presence have elegance,**May her humour be enjoyed,**May her imperfection be accepted.**Aniepo, I leave her in your hands.**Mold her, guide her, protect her,*

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Lead her into a cheerfully decent life.

Help her know right from wrong,

Grant her not a mediocre home.

Aniepo, let the nature be her beauty.

May she always bloom like spring.

Let hatred and jealousy be blind.

Let no men or women crave in lust.

And let no shadow fall in her path.

When she sprouts physically,

May she learn and accept nature's bounty,

And stay away from evil forces,

Who turn love into a game.

Her body belongs to only her.

When her time comes, help her find love,

Even if its turns blue and cuts her deep,

I'll be glad as she'll know what fake love is,

And so will have a strong soul,

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To overcome the visitors in her life.

When troubles knocks her, remind her of me,

That I'll stand by her and comfort her.

Even if she doesn't like what I tell her,

Help to ensure my words hold value.

A mother knows best.

Editor's note- The opening lines of the poem is in the Chakesang dialect, and can be understood as, "*Lord, grant me my prayers, For I pray for my child.*"

Prayer For My Child

Mereninla Jamir

BA 4th Semester

If only I knew its gender
Then my prayer would be vain.
And as mother's love so tender,
My child, never will my love drain.
I'll forever remember the day,
When you'll take your first breath.
It is definite, a moment to be gay
As it will be my firstborn's first day.

Advancements so vague and clear,
To our eyes every single machines
Just to make the gender clear.
But I'd rather not favor the machines
For that will be more than to cheat
For happiness, in this devilish world.
I be patient and ponder each feat

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

For you to see the good world.

This my prayer: If a boy,

May his strength be as Samson

None to mess and treat him as toy,

But to stay by his side as garrison.

May he be wise as Solomon,

A leader like Moses, be a protector,

Not a destroyer but to summon

For truth and trust thy Creator.

He be not swayed by charm and beauty

But fathom the depth of true love.

His decisions be not fatuous and duty,

Be carried out wisely but with love.

Be reason for good, not cause for bad.

To stand by nonviolence like Gandhi,

And not be pugnacious over bad.

But abide by the teachings of Almighty.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

If a girl, may she be bright as sunshine,
Be revered by everyone for goodness,
Beauty of nature upon her to shine,
And spread the fragrance of loveliness,
Like the beautiful flowers of spring.
Her voices be heard, dreams into reality,
Wishes be fulfilled, as future brings her
Good luck and happiness in reality.

May she not fear caterpillars like me,
But Oh Lord! Take away all her fears.
Test her faith as you have tested me,
Make known to her the value of tears.
To remain a virgin until she finds the one
Who will take complete her soul.
Faun! Do not tempt her nor anyone,
Let her stay firm yet not as gravel.

This I say to you my special one;
You will live each day of your life,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Yet for nine months my dear one

I've been with you before you lived life.

None can replace the bond we share

My womb has been your home your stay

Thus to this mother, never shall you dare

To bring disgrace and to go astray.

May you be blessed musically,

And with blessed instruments of peace.

And I shall say we're both blessed,

As you spread your wings and soar.

May you be not fragile, but be a weapon

That can face tempests.

Take asylum in prayer.

Thus I pray life of yours to be sober.

And when my prayers finally come true,

I'll thank God for blessing me with you.

As you perceive what I've been through,

And say, "Thank you mother, I love you"

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Tears will run down my wrinkled face,

Not of sorrow, but of utmost joy.

And I'll embrace you and kiss your face,

For your birth brightened my soul.

As you grow up, a day will draw near

When you'll be free from naivety.

And this the truth you'll learn my dear

As you read my prayer with dignity,

That when I wrote this, I was but nineteen.

Prayerfully writing with love for you,

Thus, hear this, my beloved child:

Before you were even born, I loved you.

Aria of the Lark

Salikyu Sangtam, Ph.D.

Asst Professor, Dept of Political Science

The Lark sings a delightful song;

The fresh spring breeze,

It's pleasant happy Melody.

The Reed plays its divine flute;

The wildflowers, the azure

Skies and the lush green

Rolling hills dance to

The song of the Lark.

THE FACT OF MY LIFE

Likupu,

BA 4th Semester

In a world that worship perfection,
Thirst, innate desire; for glory and fame
Seeking for victory and beauty; unending love, tender care
Yield for unlimited joy, peace and greater happiness.
Strive for perfection and outmost for excellence.

Born and designed to be a girl.
Destined to be one and only me,
Longs for someone to share laughter,
Misery and cry to have as one.
Incomplete and emptiness I feel the most;
Loneliness creeping down to my soul.

Restrictions and protections; received both
Feels the top of the world, but
Comes with their dreams to be fulfilled
Expectations at its highest peak; their
Hopes, future and dreams on me,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Betrayed and burdened is what I feel.

In its final phase, it is I alone to struggle.

TILL THE END

Juni W Sumi

BA 4th Semester

My heart sinks deep as your name is pronounced.

Thoughts of you melt my heart.

Your name is imprinted in my soul,

Entwined is our soul..

They say initial days, the best,

But our story certainly is sweetest as it matures.

Your unceasing protection and unending love,

Keeps me alive and rejuvenates this relation.

Distance bothers, but our thoughts mingle.

Thousands obstacles, yet undefeated, we stand.

Thousand differences, yet unbreakable we are.

Strong zeal to stand till the end.

Oh! How fortunate am I to have found you.

Flattered is my heart in your presence,

Sorrow within me in your absence.

May this flame burn and not dwindle till the very end.

A GIRL CHILD

Yanbeni

BA 2nd Semester

Reports of a "She" in her womb
Triggered preparations to lay "She"
in the tomb.

"She" was to be born,
Even before "She" could be born.
"She" was left to die inside.

Even before "She" could see the outside.
Throughout the injury,
Echoed her silent cry.

Let me be born
Let me too have life
Let me shine
Like beautiful moon.

Why do you hate me?
Why so cruel to me

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Tell me why!

Answer me, I yell

Would some please tell?

Am I such a disgrace?

My faint cries echoed

What are you trying to erase?

Tell me why?

Why? Why? Why?

No! No one heard her voice

They had already made their choice...

ODE TO MY MOM

Takotemsu,
BA 2nd Semester

The one who gave me life,
Grasping warm hands with march to thrive.
Never tired of watching her.
My mother, my best friend;
Gives me courage to walk alone,
Scolding, when I go astray,
Sacrificing everything, without a second thought.
Loving, kind and fun mom, have I!
My evening cries when she is away,
Feels solitude in her absence.
Her presence delights me,
Her smile enfolds me,
For thy unending love, but I wonder,
Will she be staying with me forever?

A Prayer For My Daughter

Ayusanen

BA 4th Semester

Dear Lord, let her be born,
In a world of tranquility;
Unlike the world of today,
Filled with evil and hate.
And as she grows up,
Take her under your care,
Grow more into her life,
And pull her towards salvation.

May she find success in life,
But in only in melodious ripples,
So she keeps her feet firm
On the ground of realities,
Not losing sight of the greatest goal.
Lord, do prevent her
From corrupt and unfair ways,
To attain success in life.

May she have some tough years,
To understand the value of life.
May she not have a taste for alcohol,
May she not lead a reckless life,
May she not be narrow and cold,
But rather be Innocent and warm.
O Lord, wrap your arms around her
Surround her life with good folks.

Lead her, protect her
From hungry wolves,
From criminal minds,
From deceptive friends,
And deliver her from all evil.
May she be witty and pretty,
And flourish like the cornucopia.
Under your mighty care.

Lastly, may she be beautiful.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Beautiful enough to find,

A pure and righteous heart.

A lover that would hold her

When she stumbles.

It's true, no love can

Overshadow a father's love,

But I hope she finds a heart,

That can rival mine.

THE UNSEEN BEAUTY

Tokavi

BA 6th Semester

Bewildered in beauty,
She rejuvenates her mind frequently.
Fragile sound brings disarray,
And fades with an eye beats.

Attractive thoughts as cherishing air,
Scattered hair of disillusion,
Lips and arms are disgruntled,
Discord between reality and dreams.

Her unclean fresh thoughts,
Resembles her gloomy smile,
That is frozen in hell,
And does not relinquish in ugly.

MY BLUE DRESS

Yiboni Humtsoe,

BA 4th Semester

Blue dress of mine!

Gifted by a friend.

Oh! How lovely and beautiful,

The onlookers gaze on with envy.

Beauty I command, when I wear it.

I look at myself in the mirror,

And a change in me I find,

Am I reborn, or transformed?

No matter what, I know I look the best.

Grateful am I to you,

My dear comrade for this.

I wonder, does men make dresses,

Or dresses make the man?

An eternal question this proves to be,

And even if unanswered,

Still pretty shall I be.

I value the dress for it has changed me,

Almost like forbidden magic.

I have new identity,

And I have found a new 'Me'.

TURNING 20

Vini H Aye,
BA 4th Semester

In my 16's; mild and gentle
Psychology stressed towards,
"When I grow up".
Lots of dreams; lots to do.
Waiting every moment,
Dreaming every night,
Gazing at myself,
Saying, "Someday I'm gonna be".

"Simple living, high thinking",
Was never a concept.
Walk accordingly, I maintained.
"Life's good", I observed.
Towards the light,
I wonder about my future,
Not as in 'Prufrock'.
But mind never rest,
'A teenage phase' I learn.

Never in life had I thought,
Turning 20 by 13th Sept '16.
A flow of regrets,
Now ponder one o'er and o'er.
Not hath my dream shattered,
But lost wondrous gaiety time,
With perfection in all means and ways,
Should have stepped in.
Somebody, somewhere, should have been.

Never too late, I regained,
Facing adventure for blooming days.
Unbridled and unrestrained,
Assured and prepared.
Not an ordinary commitment,
But a deliberate vow.
Ministry to exalt His name,
Be a woman: be an inspiration.

MY SECOND HOME

Lidia Venyo,
BA 4th Semester

My second home, sheltered
Among the trees so green,
Kissed by the sun and dewdrops.
As clear as crystal,
Makes it sparkling and bright,
Giving the essence happiness.
The sun is not high, but
It will be after sometime.

The lovely and beautiful flowers,
The enchanting breeze,
Pulling me towards the breathless,
Garden of fragrance, saying,
It's time to serve our day's drink.
With pots filled with water,
I walk towards the garden.
Ah, how happy they seem to be!

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

If only they could produce,
Sweet melodies for me, then I would
Give them my claps of love.
Leaving thoughts in the garden,
I sit down reminiscing over
Last summer, how I enjoyed
The juicy fruits of mother-nature's gift,
And I'm thinking that
I'll be blessed this year.

Oh! How my thoughts fluctuate
As quick as lightening,
But one thing is clear;
I get drowned in the
Thoughts of nature, as it brings
Everlasting beauty to the world.
Of perfect pleasure, my second home
Though it's not real, yet,
I find comfort in thee.

PRAYER FOR MY SON

Bendangyula Jamir

BA 4th Semester

Life would be pointless
As for most would recall;
Without your presence it'll be meaningless—
For every being yearn for a child,
My own blood which I'll call mine,
Like a glow that's so fine.

Future is what underlies ahead,
An unknown realm...
Because I know not of what it might bring.
All I wish for is to embrace you in thy arms,
A son, My son whom I'd call him Mine,
He'll have blissful charming eyes!

Happiness shall surround, and smiles reign,
That day would never weary—
For my eyes will be teary,
With him warmed in my arms ;

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

The joy would never cease,
For he'll be the breathe I breathe.

The roses of the fields may wither,
But my little one smile mustn't vanish,
When he grow up, may he be like Solomon;
Identifying right from wrongs,
Wisely making allies,
Dispatching away from sins.

May he be like spring: ever blossoming,
And there be no room for agony.
Always lively like the greenery,
With alluring spirit like the scenery.
Arrogance and hatred out of sight,
Make him live in the bright of the light.

With time he'd grow older—
In those weighed down years,
One day he'll sit by, think of his future,
For that day a prayer, I pray —
Dear son, never stop being grateful,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Make decisions saturated with wisdom,
Not thy just with one element,
But with all thy heart, mind, and soul,
For I know life isn't an easy pathway.

There will be times,
Times when things would start crashing
Like the meteors raining from the skies.
And when you feel like everything's falling apart,
For that day a prayer, I pray—
Don't hesitate to approach me, my child!
Come and consult with me, this I plead;
For always remember, I'm here for you.

In moments when temptations shall arise,
By worldly pleasure, or through ways of life.
For all I pray is for your innocence to stay,
And never to forget the love I've for you!
For you'll be the precious gift I've received,
As heaven itself gifted me an angel
Whom I long to cherish forever.

There'll come the time, your own family you shall have,
Give all your love to them,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

For I barely remember what a father's love is,
As he parted too soon—
So this I say, don't get carried away,
Nothing trumps your family.

And someday, when crouched in front of
My grave, azure with flowers and moss,
You feel lost, alone, and sad,
Know this my son, my love is a talisman.
And though I be amidst stars,
This poem shall be your guiding light!

DAUGHTER'S LONGING

Linokali Sumi

BA 2nd Semester

Mother's womb was where I was,
Not yet born, but happy I was.
Happy to meet my family
Daddy, mummy, and loving siblings.
Eager was I, to step into
The bright and beautiful world.

Stepped I into this beautiful world
Happy was I, so was my family
But soon, lonely and cold I felt.
All eyes round the room
When covered with tears,
All in search of daddy.

Six months in my mother's womb,
When daddy passed away.
Never have I ever seen him
Never have I ever felt his love.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

How then, will I feel I wonder?

When I see my daddy?

Lass of twenty I am now,

But I have wailed in dark.

Thinking about daddy

Longing for his love

Longing all alone

With pain in my heart.

Will I continue this life,

Longing for daddy's love?

Will my tears ever stop?

Daddy, how long will I wait?

Take me with you!

How long will I wait for your love?

Forever I guess.

WAITING FOR LOVE

Lito K Zhimomi

BA 2nd semester

I resolved to set free

For I know you would come, one day.

I've liked you since the day we met

And so far I haven't let down.

Your very presence

Makes my life complete.

Without you everything around me

Is colourless and black.

Because of the feeling I have for you;

You are my Shining star,

In my life's blue sky.

I looked for you each time,

I am sad and low hoping that

One day, you will be the wings to fly me to the moon.

But waiting and waiting;

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

I'm still up afloat.

For I think;

The Stars are out and the moon is high

At times, I don't know what to believe,

Since no signs are left to find.

Each day I lost myself

For the candles are lit,

And hope is heartache.

I just wished that I had a heart

That you decided to spare.

For I don't need to go alone,

Into the valley that is unknown.

Nevertheless! My heart is hopeful,

And still awaits!

Deep inside, I know

That God has dedicated you,

With affection for me.

Hang on Love!

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

I'll be waiting; for the storm

Where you'll stepped into my hand a Rose

And be my deeping sky;

And I will hold your star,

For that is all, can be asked.

OUR LIFE

Kato Achumi

BA 4th Semester

Life that we own is a gift;
A blessing that has been bestowed.
Each moment to be grateful.
Oh! How blessed are we?

Our life is like a plant that grows daily,
It'll never be the same.
As years pass we'll all grow?
As we grow our future's vision is clear.

Our life is the sum of experiences
That we encounter as we live through
Perhaps, harder times are for sure
But we should react firm towards.

Our life is full of challenges
That lets us to encounter
Sometimes we may succeed

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Sometime we may result in failure.

Our life is a dream;

A dream that no one can predict,

Yet, we plan for it.

We'll never know when it'll perish.

Our life has a purpose;

A purpose that has been set,

It lies at the hands of beholder.

Oh! How blessed we are.

MELANCHOLIC MELODY

Avikali Tuccu

BA 2nd Semester

My tears are not heard
My voice is ignored,
They said: Women are weak
Needed to be governed
Ye first creation itself was Man.
Head of all living
No objections have I
For I adore my man.
Needed not look down on 'Us'
For we practice all in common
The food, the cloths, the air
All and all.
We're wilder, we're dedicated,
Be not of physical strength.
Why turn dead ear on 'Us'?
Ha, Men, all men everywhere
CAPTAIN AMERICA of the nation?
Nay, HULK of destruction

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

SPIDERMAN with its web

Makes thee thy prey.

Thou art also TRANSFORMERS

Transforms its forms

At home and out world

Despise and enslaves women.

A hunger for power

Eats its own cub

Forgets its first love

A man is a BATMAN.

DIGNITY OF LABOUR

Bwenyhunle Kath

BA 4th Semester

Grew up among the rich
Poor with not enough bread to eat.
Not enough clothes to cover,
Not proper shelter to live in.

An honest and humble labour.
Lean on wage for daily life,
Married a loving, supportive woman
They were fruitful and multiply in number.

Sun shone upon him,
Rain showered on him.
Harsh wind blows on him,
Abused by the rich in many ways
Yet work hard and sincerely for the joy of the family.

Goes to work even when he is sick,
When he doesn't go to work,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Family sleep in hunger with tears.

Like machine he works which consume oil,

Worked as long as he is fill,

And stops when the oil is finished.

Does every work to earn a living.

Hide his tears, hunger, tiredness, thirst

And work to keep the family alive.

Have sleepless nights with ache on his back,

But never show his pain.

Poor, yet keeps dreaming to have a small house.

Didn't followed any corrupt practices,

And work with dignity.

Ten years past, built a home,

With his hands, with care, honesty, sincerity and happiness.

Live happily with wife and children

And still continues to work honestly and sincerely.

THE UNFORGIVEN

Alino K Chishi,
BA 4th Semester

Three years have passed,
And I have never seen her
When I flash back the past,
It's like a thousand pins ache in my heart.

Its 'I' that will tell you the truth, now.
Remember let no blessing pass you by,
Says the proverb and mother,
Making sure of everything,
But wasn't unaware of anything.

I am from Arts stream,
And that is what I did not want.
As a child I dreamt to achieve big,
Let the pain begin, sigh.

There were many and I am the one,
That left her with the bitterness.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

It was she that wasn't given respect.

All the rules were forgotten,

All she could do was cry and forgive

Tears that were thick and never runs dry

And I wasn't aware of the blessing.

Unsure of my future, of what I am today

Must be the blessing that never bestowed on me,

The Unforgiven

That made a high wall between me and the medicine.

I believe she was a blessing

And I am the one that run ahead of the blessing;

Like one missed the train

And I remain Unforgiven.

ODE TO MY MOTHER

Yenbeni Humtsoe

BA 4th semester

Hard to believe that you are gone,

You left us without a single word.

The tender smile is all gone;

Gone in a haste with the souls.

Wish I never have to feel so alone.

Wish we could still be together.

Wish I am still happy.

Wish you are still alive.

Without you by my side,

I am so scared of the world;

All my hopes fade away like a gentle breeze,

Not a day I do not think of you.

LOST AND FOUND

Vinika Chishi

BA 4th Semester

I was half a soul,
When in such tender age
Of bitter truth was told
What a way to hide the rage.

Identity and assurance,
Two treasures I sought.
Just another daughter
Anything special in her?

Fools looked for love,
And the wise know of such
To lose yourself in a quest
Of acceptance and hope, no detest.

They told me I was supposed to be of different gender
In religious prophecy, before the time of my birth
And upon such delusional opinion I gave in.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Yes, I was gullible and tender.

Years and years, endless efforts

To show the world I was good enough

Upon my little brother I told of such

I am older, I am better, no words, just pretention.

In my quest I found

No answer of what I questioned.

Only in a verse I encountered

My eyes drenched in tears, no sound.

I have looked everywhere,

In friends, family and love conditioned.

But everything was certain,

When I myself saw my redemption.

He knew me, before

I was formed in the womb.

Before I was born,

He set me apart.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Like a slave's chain loosened,
A prisoner finally seeing the open sky, I flew,
Rather than being torn apart,
I was rescued with a sword that pierced right through.

Only a fragment of story I confess
But with a testimony I declare
One is found only in a book, no offence
Pages turned, answers told, your fare.

The book has a name,
You and I know of it.
It's up to you to consider if,
The story you choose, the author be HE.

Let go, I told myself in assurance
I still held on, it ate me up.
But when I gave in, I awakened
I saw love everywhere for I am observant.

He loved me through people
In toughest times, I cried

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

But with healing and strength moved forward

In Him, I am found and detached from rejection.

FORBIDDEN; THE UNTOLD STORY

Vini H Aye,
BA 4th Semester

Twelve years by now,
Waiting at the same spot,
Railway to Shillong, 4: 00 AM
Visualizing that moment,
When I saw your blue eyes swollen.
I wish I said,
I love you too
I do and I find my home in you.

Oh! I shut myself.
Letting your hand go,
Making my breath heavy.
Seeing you moving in the train,
I miss your last hug.
And the promise I made you
For that oath; I'm here,
Every morning till dawn,
Hoping and longing,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

With the twilight that gives me strength.

Not if that pain, lived in me,

Penetrating my whole body every night.

You have no idea,

How much would I,

Wanted to love you back.

With every day that passes by,

My soul losses too.

Tell me, why would I be selfish?

I live with no future nor wishes.

Cancer will consume me soon.

I hid my story forbidden,

For untold would make your life easier.

Here I wait for your arrival,

To let you see me first,

As promised,

But indeed the LAST.

Longing

Salikyu Sangtam, Ph.D.

Asst Professor, Dept of Political Science

As the Reed flute

Hums a lonely cord;

I, thus, long for you.

As the Harp plays its

Enchanting melody; I am,

Thus, enchanted by you.

BLINDED SOUL

Nungshijungla Tzudir

BA 2nd Semester

Blue skies and cotton candy clouds,
Nature, like a child's innocence.
The playground of life,
With swift cadence flow,
Nature begins to show.
The murmuring winds sigh,
As they carry around new life
To be planted on valleys of green.
Nothing mortal in them, this shall all pass,
Figures of mortal man cursing God's creation.
They invoke beauty as though it doesn't exist.
Obscured by selfishness,
They shall never see.
Twisted mind and dying soul,
Mortal man forever shall remain cold.

A Prayer for My Son

Vinika Chishi

BA 4th Semester

In the still evening of June,
A grieved heart sought for solitude.
Men could be cruel if they chose to lure.
The fate of a child has no place for a fool.
Beside the window, I stood still glaring,
The pavements visited by the echoes of children.
If a mother's desire I had for my firstborn,
A son I should say should be delivered of course.

With time ticking, I uttered a prayer,
Chose every word with careful dictation.
Every sentence out of love came from the heart,
Words of blessings and protection spoken.
It is the will of every mother for her son's happiness,
Destiny emerged from the tongue of a mortal.
For I was born into the world to fulfill,
The wishes of my dear mother's prayer.

His eyes when opened, look upon my love for him.
All his playful days be filled with wonder,
Songs of my lullabies put him to dream sweet dreams.
Everyday be an adventure as he greets the sun.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Like a prince I would like him to feel and know,
Whatever he needs, love, peace, hope, all is his possession.
Yes, may he have all the joys in the world,
Every good thing a mother could wish for her beloved.

I pray, he love his mother dearly,
As Jesus loved His mother Mary in obedience.
Oh, time will go by, he'll soon be but youthful,
Curious and fragile, seeking attention and purpose.
The truth he may know the worth of his breath,
When the maker maketh only one of him.
Friends be true that like Jonathan was to David
And villains as wicked as Iago depart from his presence.

Let him be favoured as Joseph, his dreams fulfilled,
Granted honour and success by God Almighty.
May his enemies kneel to him in conviction.
And my son, with a forgiving heart offer reconciliation.
Give him strength like Hercules, not to destroy, rather lift,
His presence lifting the heavy hearted with delight.
Ever be humble and ready to embrace weaknesses.
As King David did in his hour of repentance.

May wisdom be his faithful friend,
As he learns the realities of life.
A grip on truth, never to let it slip,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

If an enemy he must have, ignorance be it.
Toil and hardships he will face to earn bread,
Gain satisfaction and gratitude as his harvest.
The world influencing young men to cheat,
May my little boy rise up to be an example for loyalty.

Compassion is what I require of the brave soul,
His nature to never hurt a woman, never at all.
Being every woman's dream but existing only for one.
Samson's strength lay in his long hair,
Deceived by a woman, Delilah her name.
Plotting her husband's death, get thee away woman.
Forget his heart, not a strain of hair she shall get.
But a woman of integrity follow him, like Ruth to Naomi.

A day will come, my son, a Father.
Papa! Daddy! Will a tiny mortal call.
To find happiness is a journey within.
To read the map of one's own soul.
May he see the true treasures of life.
A family, a relationship, and Love's inheritance.
His eyes be opened, his heart speak in agreement.
"Life is good, my mother's prayers have been answered."

AWAY FROM HOME

Alibo Awomi

BA 2nd Semester

All alone I go nowhere.

Away from family is a problem,

Happiness is elsewhere,

Missing is my sweet home.

Though friends all around,

Loneliness is in forewarn.

Love and care of mom is missed,

Feeling of her presence is best.

All alone I go nowhere,

Selfish burdens gnarling,

Sadness and heartbreak,

In these thoughts myself despising.

Undeniable dudgeon is a pain,

Seeking solution is in vain,

Complaints are made in many,

Would they be replied in any?

Serving Life's Purpose

Likupu

BA 2nd semester

Through this world of wonder,
My body, it shall yonder.
Through darkness in the night,
And days with the light.

Many masters it will find,
Money or power to go blind,
The rains of aging it shall bear,
And the ends it shall hear.

Through this world of wonder,
My body, as it yonder.
My life shall come to an end,
It was, maybe straight or bent.

When everything will go black,
There is nothing I would lack.
Served my purpose, what I did,

In it my masters I did beat.

Close my eyes, but in peace

For I found, what is bliss.

In the darkness of the night

And days with the light.

SOLDIERS OF THE WIND

Viboli Achumi

BA 2nd Semester

As the storms crashed on the Rocks
The Rocks stood tall and the strong,
Like an army in the battle.
The Rocks braved and fought,
The might of the storm;
The force of the sea
They did not move,
Nor did they give up.
They stood and fought,
With their pride held high,
Their flags soaring high in the sky.
For they called not to be defeated
They called not to be moved.
They were the rocks, the soldiers,
That saved us from our own undoing.

From our own wickedness and sin
They did not have,

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Caste nor religion.

They were united.

“Rocks” that fought together

Through the storm

So that they could live,

To see a day,

When they were free.

And no more would have to fight,

For their survival.

They were Rocks, living

Like no other!

DEEP

Yhunchule Kent

BA 2nd Semester

There is a thought in my mind;

Yes, a thought on how I feel inside

Unusually, there is a curious smile on my face

Oh, there is a smile indeed.

Why do I close my eyes?

And why do I open them?

Isn't that a simple thing to do?

Or it's difficult sometime.

The air on my head

Yes, I can feel

But when I dream

I do not notice.

There is something living

My, my, it's a heart

As I listen to it it beat

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Everything makes sense.

Why am I alive?

And why are you too?

Why do I smile?

And why do you not?

For into the deep

I found a thought

And I am that thoughtful thought

I went deeper only to find another one.

A man is the way he thinks

Entertain thoughts

Behave as you think

Get drawn in depth of a soul.

You could get lost

In the search of answer

To deny of your feeling

A battle an enemy to defeat.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

A hundred excuses you can utter
But deciding one's heart
Is an undeniable offence
Flood your mind with ceaseless worries.

You can find yourself
In a thought of wonder
See the beauty of a soul that never existed you created.

Masters of the mind
Guardian of a heart
Explore the abundance
It is in the deep you purpose.

Forget not to see another
The beauty and compassion
In the windows of creped eyes
See the unexposed of the universe.

The deeper you go
The more you find
But stop and remember

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Can you go back again?

The way you used to be

A man you choose to see

Witness someone new not in looks

But the treasures of his gain in deep roots.

MEMORIES OF FIRST LOVE

Ayusanen

BA 4th Semester

Heart melted on first sight,
Her beauty knew no bound.
A glimpse of her made me shy,
Making the first move made me bold.
Silently approaching myself near
That I may hold her by the hand.

She became all for mine,
Made me the happiest man alive,
And became the sunshine of my life.
She filled my life with showers of love,
Thus, giving me deep joy within,
Promises of unending love made me blind.

Became cold as time passed by;
Withered away like the dying flower.
She left me dying for another being,
Happiness turned to misery in a flash.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Life became a living hell,
And still my heart longed for her.

Heart shattered like a piece of glass,
Felt like thousand needles piercing the heart.
Thinking of her, made me cry,
The wound of heartbreak killed me inside.
Time passed by and wounds healed,
Yet, the scar remained afresh,
Reminding e of the cruel side of love.

UNSEEN LOVE

Linokali Sumi

BA 4th Semester

Friends with sparkling eyes,
Beautiful smile and sunny faces.
Talks about their father,
Sharing stories about the job,
Gifts and love shared by their father,
Oh! How blessed they are.
How proudly they smile.
How happy they look.
Like the dancing flowers.
Oh! How happy they are.

Alas! Here I stand, firm with tears,
Hearing their stories and wondering,
What if I could also share one.
A dream for me,
Since I have none.
It makes me lonely and broken,
Every time they talk.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

Tears fill my eyes,
I fake a smile,
What else can I do but hide my feelings?

My heart is like a broken vase.
Millions of pieces inside of me.
Here I stand looking fine,
With all the pains inside.
Night after night, tears roll,
Thinking how life will be.
If father was here with me.
Oh! How broken I am.

I've shed many tears,
And have realized that
Everything happens for a reason.
Now I miss him with a smile,
And a faith that
He is watching over me.
Watching all my steps.
Daddy, our love can never be seen.

PROMISE IS FOR KEEPS

S Lika Sumi

BA 4th Semester

In the whisper of the gentle wind

I hear your promise dear.

Soft as the kiss of moonlight,

Firm as the ancient hills.

Promise if for keeps my love.

That you and I know for sure.

Sweeter thro' stormy days,

Promise is for keeps my love.

To one who is far and dear.

In every tender leaves of spring,

I read your promise dear.

While the world watches by,

The fast maturing face bring.

In every rainbow after showers,

Oh dear! I see your promise.

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Beyond those leafless cherry trees,

Can I see the blossoming promise?

ABHOR

Shenili Chishi

BA 4th Semester

Pain is a part of life,
That's what everyone says.
The sorrow it gives to my very soul and heart,
I cannot express to anyone.
Underneath, I am held captive by the hole,
Feels like dying from inside.
What did I ever do wrong to her?
Why is she mentally tormenting me?
The anger inside me
Will only make us alike.
And I don't want that in me.
All I can do is pray.
To make it like olden days,
Where love once lived.

ONE DECISION, ONE HAPPINESS

Mhalesieno Kere

BA 4th Semester

Freedom is what I want.

Decisions that I take is never mine.

The words that come out of me,

Is either my friends and family.

If I pour out my feelings,

None agrees with it.

Don't I deserve to make one decision?

I know they care for me

But I want to follow my heart.

One decision of my own.

Family, friends, relatives,

Why don't you leave me alone?

Status, class, I don't care,

Pillars and rocks I am not

To bear your criticism

Criticism from everywhere.

And all my heart wants

Is to be with him.

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Leave him, see status, says they

Is this necessary when you truly love someone?

Family, friends, relatives,

Be my mentor, my guide

Not the remote of my life.

All I can do is,

Just follow what my heart says,

Ignore what they say,

One happiness, one decision of my own.

Hope

Narosangla T
BA 4th Semester

In the midst of variety of feelings,
Hope is the one that keeps us going.
The rich, the poor, to win and not to lose,
Hope is always there for those who choose.

Hope keeps us going even in the hardest days
It opens our eyes to finds means and ways.
Hope is the only word for the weary,
It serves as a path leading to victory.

Oh ray of hope! Ray of hope!
You are like beautiful rope.
Help me to hang on to you
So that I can see your beauty.

When I am down and lost,
When all my dreams are shattered,
You lift me up.

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Because of you, I have learned

Never to give up.

BOND OF A SISTER

Bendangyula jamir

BA 4th Semester

A calm gentle sister she is,
Speak less, obey more.
People say we are opposites.
And yes! I believe it's true.
They say she looks younger,
But I never wished to look older.
Still it never bothers,
As we know ourselves better.

So little we were when we started out.
Holding onto one another,
Standing strong and firm,
Stronger than the Great Wall of China.
Since our bond is not mere,
Bondage of sand and brick.
We share in our hearts,
The bond of eternal togetherness.

THE LONGING TO CALL

Bwenyhunle Kath

BA 4th Semester

What a dreadful night it was!

Hot mid-night with complete silence.

Sleepless night with my sick dad.

Dad, restless, told mom to forgive him

And take good care of us.

Begged us to pray for him,

Speechless and numb was mom.

His last breath was a plea,

"I don't want to die".

My heart broke into pieces,

My soul and mind froze.

Our lives completely changed

Emotions filled when asked,

What does your father do?

When other called out "dad"

I envy them for I do not have one.

Whom shall I call “dad”?

Eight years have passed by,

But memories and words remain in my heart.

EMPTINESS

Lidia Vinyo

BA 4th Semester

I say it's emptiness

But I am not empty

Filled with horrors of sin, I confess

Yet repeat without fear.

The Almighty must hate me now

Oh! How this thought kills me.

Hopeless, without vision

I follow the wrong and reject the right.

Lost my peace and in great darkness

Double minded and in agony.

Your words evolves in my mind,

Reminding me of you again.

Yet, this wretched mind deceives by saying

"You are easy to forgive and forget".

But lo, I take refuge in "You"

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I come seeking for "You".

Filled with lust of sin,

I ask "You" to grant me grace.

To repent again and not to forget,

That, I am just a traveler in this world.

TO MY LOVE

Surotsala Y Sangtam

BA 4th Semester

Life to me, you are,
Smile to me, you are,
Happiness to me, you are,
My heart wants more of you,
Holding my hands and walking beside me,
Your love for me is,
Patience, care and honor to me.
In you I found heaven
Promises made,
To fight and live life together.

A Prayer For My Daughter

Inaholi Shohe

BA 4th Semester

An enraptured mother I shall be,
To have mini little me,
Dulcet and lithe, she shall beside me lie,
I will lilt and quiescent,
She may rest, and when she weeps,
A sweet mellifluous lullaby,
I shall joyfully whisper.

She shall bear a talisman in her,
That'll hide her from distress.
Idyllic and halcyon she'll be,
And loved by myriad,
Her beauty: resplendent bright,
Be harsh to none, nor she
Be cynical ever, never.

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Brood she may of all

Rhapsodic feelings.

Demure she may be,

Her beauty be an elixir to all.

And no lustful eyes meet her.

Her voice be that of eloquence,

And not evanescent but forever last.

Her heart, as rich as sapphires,

And her love to me be

Like the snow on Everest, everlasting.

She may grow, but not become vain,

Soon become a woman,

But for us she'll always be our girl.

Her eyes sparkle with mirth.

Her groom I pray takes her

Away nowhere distant;

Roots in him she'll find.

Yet, my consent be valued,

The will of heaven, and mine alike.

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She may have mini little her,

On a fine day like this.

For You, My Child

Vini H Aye

BA 4th Semester

My Darling, sweetest of all,
A dove in my womb,
I carry with love and care.
An unknown feeling, full of glee,
I now dream of milestones new.
Lives in me a life,
A Motherhood; my greatest achievement.

The thirst to see a glance of yours,
Grows with every passing hour.
Outside, the world goes on by,
While lost in daydreams stay I,
Unsure at times, how it'll all be,
There may be courses million,
But none on how to parent.

Pains of the past roll away,

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As I feel connected to you.

A joy in every waking moment.

A baby inside my flesh and blood,

Cannot be compared to else.

Mixed emotions assail my mind,

Dark fears at times rage on.

Joyfully curious am I.

Whether you're a Sarah or a Jake,

You'll be the apple of my eyes.

And I shall love you like no one else,

Your first laugh, your first smile,

The first time you'll be in my arms,

It'll all be a piece of heaven for me.

A song of prayer I sing,

Like once my mother had sung.

Crave with pure spiritual milk,

Dear child, as you grow in salvation.

May your life be like a rainbow;

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Colours of love...full of love,

Be dutiful, stay moral, be a blessing.

May the 'Light' never leave your sight,

In turn, be a lighthouse to all.

May others see in you,

The glory of the Creator,

His majesty, his grace,

Be good my child, is all I pray,

And forever love me.

Love's Secrets

Salikyu Sangtam, Ph.D.

Asst Professor, Dept of Political Science

Shall I ask the Jasmines
And the Lilies to whisper
The secrets to their
Comeliness. Shall I ask the
Magpies, the Cuckoos, the Nightingales
To give away the secrets
To their enchanting songs.
Shall I ask the Meadow,
The Wildflowers, the Mountain streams,
And the fresh Spring breeze
To impart the secrets
To their Heavenly serenity.
My Love, you reside in
All of these secrets. I will
Long for you thus:
In the enchanting songs
Of the Birds, in the

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Comeliness of the Jasmines

And the Lilies, and in

The Heavenly Splendour of

The Meadow dotted with

Wildflowers by the

Mountain Streams in

The serenity of the

Fresh Spring Breeze.

Think of Me

Rhilo Mero

BA 4th Semester

To my unseen child, my one and only,
Thoughts of the you fills me with delight.
So many things to tell and show you,
And even more to learn from you.
Right now I write to you,
Who will soon be born of me.
I know not of your nature,
Nor do I know of your future.
Tis' much I know, I'll have you,
And with time we'll grow together too.
I shall gift you my treasures,
To fill your world with pleasures,
So you may know what's mine is yours;
Yours to keep and yours to store,
So that you may also do the same
To keep the honour of one's name.
Should you be a boy; be the man she loves,
Should you be a girl; be the one he is proud of.

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If I were to choose between the two,
I know I wouldn't even dare to so do.
For I'm happy to have any,
In sharing my love that's plenty.
Lastly, when all things matter
And perhaps I fail you later,
In being that one man you need,
Know that my heart beats for you,
My child, and I was only trying my best.
Will you still call me 'dad' again?

I AM, EVERY WOMAN

Kahor Raleng

Asst Professor, Dept of English

Unknown is my name,
Uncertainty is my future,
Discriminated is my race,
I am a woman.

Strong is my character,
Gentle is my personality,
Mastered only by my kind,
I am a woman.

I am my own person,
Yet, I belong to a man.
I have no name to my roots,
Yet, mankind came through me.

Suppressed is my voice,
Meaningless is my thought,
Powerless in decision making,

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Yet, I make a man.

Born to be judged,

Born to be used,

Yet, I build a home.

I am, Every Woman.

SHORT STORIES

The art of storytelling and story writing is immortal. Stories have always captured the imagination and encapsulated the beauty of the mind. There is a story within every soul.



Love letters to the Lady in Red

Vizolie Khatsu

BA 2nd Semester

The playful wind tried to pull away my coat with its cold hands as it crept upon unsuspecting pedestrians; people like me. I clutched tightly onto my umbrella in this evenly-matched tug-of-war with the wind, as I made my way from the college to my hostel.

I took a road which I usually never trod on, as I had to go to a friend's hostel to collect some notes for some classes I had missed the previous days; owing to the fact that I have contracted a cold from the freezing weather.

How I met her was a complete coincidence. There she stood all alone, dressed in a red jacket, sheltered under a shop's roof; trying to escape the rain. I had seen her, a couple of times as we were in the same class and I talked with her maybe once or twice, when she asked for my notes. She waved her mitten-covered hands in a fast motion in my direction with a face pulled and stretched conveying an emotion which was a mixture of relief and anxiety. I waved back awkwardly, finding it hard to move my arms properly through the heavy winter clothes.

'Hey, could you pleeease drop me to my hostel just around the corner? (The please was said in a high pitch and pulled longer than normal). I would have called my friends but I totally forgot about my phone and left it in the hostel. She pleaded with her hands joined at the palms raised up in my direction. I felt amused and slightly embarrassed of her actions and I agreed. With an enthusiastic 'yes' she elbowed the air with her clenched fist and hopped under my umbrella and we started our way to her hostel, which was along the road of where my hostel was located. She had a really lively personality and kept talking on and on, while I, being an introvert, could barely manage few words and replied in nods and grunts and just smiled and

laughed at what I thought were the right times to do so, as I didn't want her thinking all her talking was going to waste. But the awkwardness I felt didn't persist for much longer as we reached her hostel very soon. 'Thank you soo (said in the same way as earlier) much,' she said as she waved her hands vigorously and ran off to her hostel.

In the following days, we talked in class and grew familiar with each other whenever we had the same subject combination and were seated in the same class. I opened up, straying from my otherwise secluded demeanor and started to enjoy my talks with her. She was easy to spot in a crowd because she was usually dressed in red as she told it was her favorite color. I always joked about it and she would laugh out loud in her very unique way, with her open mouth pointed up and loudly, and adding that it was her habit she was finding hard to alter. I jokingly named her Lady in Red, and she called me chubby because I was fatter than most kids, as the name suggested. We often go back to our hostels following the same path and we would spend our walk talking and cracking jokes along the way. But somehow, between the laughs and the jokes, I don't know how but I started to fall in love with her.

Her voice became my favorite song and her bright smile illuminated my life at that period of time, and I would sometimes pretend to take notes from her classmates just to get a glimpse of her.

I even started to write imaginary letters addressed to her, my "Lady in Red", and put them in my notepad. I watched her wished she were mine and I wanted to tell her how I felt but feared rejection and hesitated to make a move and so my thoughts never left the premises of my head and my notepad; tucked away safely in the bedroom of my hostel.

But that was all about to change.

In one of the following days, when I entered my classroom, there was a grin playing on the lips of one of my friends. He was a classmate and also a

hostel-mate. 'Best of luck, you'll thank me later,' he said with a laugh patting my shoulder, but I couldn't seem to comprehend what he actually meant by that.

I went to find my seat but was met by stares from the Lady in Red. She and her friends were huddled up in a corner, reading words from sheets of paper and giggling.

Imagine my embarrassment when I realized they were the imaginary love letters I had written addressing her. I walked off hurriedly to my seat, all the while cursing my friend under my breath for taking the letters and publicizing it, and I made awkward glances in her direction while she giggled on. Just then the teacher came in all of a sudden, prompting all of us to stand up and greet him. As the Lady in Red also stood up, the letters accidentally fell from her pocket to the floor.

I patiently waited for the class to end and when I saw my opportunity, I grabbed the letters from under her bench and ran off to my hostel, where I crammed the letters inside my notepad and locked it away in my suitcase.

I saw her the next day and she deemed indifferent to the incident that had occurred the day before. 'Good morning, Chubby,' she greeted me with her usual big smile.

The following days, she just looked at me and just smiled without showing any other signs than her usual self and I took it as a sign that she wanted us to be just friends.

My thoughts were confirmed when she came up to me after about a week and slapped me on my shoulder and said, 'Chubby, let's just be friends, okay?' I just accepted the fact and we became friends again though deep in my heart, I still had feelings for her.

As months passed by, our studies became harder and we started to drift apart, being busy in our own works and started to contact each other lesser than before as the days progressed on. Months accumulated into years and we went our own ways, pursuing our own studies and I lost touch with her. Many years later, As I was walking down the market to buy vegetables. Amidst the intermingling of the chaotic noises, the colorful smells and vibrant sights of the marketplace and its occupants, my eyes were distracted by a figure, red in color, moving in the distance.

'Lady in Red,' I called out to her. She turned around and started to laugh in that same old manner that she used to and slapped my shoulder and said in a high-pitched surprised tone: 'Oh my god, Chubby! You've lost all your baby fat!' We both laughed and then she gave me an offer for us to talk over a cup of coffee and I agreed. Over the cup of coffee, I started to voice how beautifully she had grown over the years. It had been years since I had seen her but when I did a rush of old and lost emotions found its way back into my heart and I was in love with her all over again. I was just admiring her and getting lost in my thoughts when suddenly, her hands hovered in front of my face and she snapped her fingers.

'Oi, what you looking at, Chubby?' she asked, as her open palms facing up moved sideways to and fro. 'Oh, nothing,' I mumbled.

'Well,' she said, 'I just completed my studies and I want to inform you of something. Guess what? I'm getting married.' And she let out a long shriek of delight, showing me the ring her fiancé had given her. I was saddened by the thought that she was never going to be mine as I still had feelings for her and I asked my sadness with a congratulatory smile. *'Wow! That's great,' I said.*

She then told me that the wedding was in a few weeks and we departed from the coffee shop. On the wedding day, white wedding dress framing the length of her cascading rolls of hair and caressing her shape which accentuated her beauty even more. I was sad but wanted the best for her so

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

when I shake hands with her and the groom, I hid my hurt with a joke: 'No red today?' I teased her.

She replied, *'Well, at least my lips are red.'*

She slapped my shoulder and laughed out loud, with the open mouth facing upwards and her back arched backward.

The groom gave her a stern look and cleared his throat prompting her to stop her laughing and trying her best to retain her lady-like composure.

'You are not really fit to be called Chubby unless you actually are chubby, are you?' she chuckled. 'Go and eat.'

After the wedding, I went back home feeling nostalgic as I had seen many old classmates I hadn't seen in years. I went to my old suitcase and pulled out my old notepad. I had not looked at it since I put it inside the suitcase many years ago on that fateful day she found out about the letters, and after flipping through the pages for some time, I found the letters.

Looking at the imaginary love letters to my Lady in Red, old memories came rushing back and I smiled with amusement even though I felt a hint of sadness too.

I started reading a poem I had written long ago for her:-

Red lips. Red like grapes hanging from a vine

Red like the juice that flows when people grind

Grapes, luscious like your lips, into fine wine

I'd get drunk if your lips ever touched mine.

I was going through the poem when seemingly out of nowhere, a small note which was foreign to me fell to the ground and I stopped reading the poem.

EXOUSIA: A TETSO COLLEGE ANTHOLOGY OF ART AND LITERATURE

I picked it up and blew the dust away and opened it up.

It was written in the unmistakable handwriting of the Lady in Red and it used red ink.

I read its contents:

"My Dear Chubby,

I love you too.

-Your Lady in Red

Xoxo"

I never opened the letters after I took them from her desk and I regretted it. Realization dawned on me and I faced the fact as I fell to the ground sobbing, cursing my misfortune and I was saddened by thoughts of the story between us that could have been.

But it was all in vain. It was all too late.

Latent Emotions

Tsukhamla,

BA 6th Semester

At five in the morning, Comleng laid asleep in her veritable hard bed with her face covered with a thin blanket, in her dim room. A few minutes later the alarm rang but she turned it off and went back to deep sleep again.

Comleng, the eldest among three siblings was in her tenth standard. Standing five feet tall with bob hair, chocolate brown eyes, toned with charming darkish complexion, she had a soft tone. Comleng defined a meaningful life as living life to the fullest with no regrets, being happy at all times and working hard. As an outspoken and also defensive person, Comleng could never keep her thoughts and feelings within her. At the same time, she was the most obedient and accommodating person at home. Filled with humour, she brought joy and laughter in her home. She was always the protector, mentor and comforter to her two siblings Jackie, twelve and Lucy, ten.

Jackie and Lucy studied in Christ school, just a stone throw away from their place. While Comleng went to Goodwill Academy, few minutes walk from home.

“Wake up, Com You will be late for your class” shouted Mrs Martha as usual, knocking at Comleng's door.

Mrs Martha, soft, loving and sensitive woman loved cooking and gardening. A good wife and an understanding mother, she was in her forties.

Comleng hesitated and pulled downed her blanket slowly. She looked at the time and it was quarter past seven, she couldn't believe she had slept this long. It was still the same as five in the morning. It was chilling cold and she hated that she have to attend class. One thing Comleng hate about winter was that her complexion gets darker and all she could do was spent all her pocket money on lightening her skin tone. She hurriedly took shower and

dressed up. She tiptoed and came out of her room, making sure that no one was there outside and locked her room very carefully.

"Bye mum, see you" said Comleng rushing off because she knows she will get a nasty scolding from her mum for being late.

'What about your breakfast? And slow down dear, be careful...' Mrs Martha was in the kitchen busy packing tiffins for Jakie and Lucy. She couldn't say anything anymore because Comleng was already gone.

As Comleng was late she had to go alone. Her friend Suzana, who lived five blocks away from Comleng has already left and She walked as fast as she could and regretted that she should have woke up when her alarm rang.

Suzana, a fair complexioned girl, had blackish hair that fell perfectly till her waist and her dark and blackish eyeballs attracted every passerby.

She had a good background; both her mum and dad work together in the same office as the administrator and director respectively. Suzana was their only child. She was Comleng's best friend. She had moved from her hometown due to her dad's transfer the previous year. She joined Goodwill Academy because it was nearest to her home. Suzana found Comleng as her only compatible friend with whom she could rely on in the new environment and new city. They were inseparable and more like sisters.

Comleng reached her school almost late and she was able to enter her class looking weary and messed up. She drag herself tiredly towards her classroom and Suzana making her way to Comleng felt like she had found a diamond.

'Hey, Com! You are late today. I waited for you and called but you didn't answer my calls, what is wrong with your phone?' complained Suzana.

'Yeah...I woke up late and I am sorry I couldn't answer your calls because I was in such a hurry that I didn't even do my breakfast but its good that you came right away because you might have been late for me.'

'You could have called me but anyway since you are here let's just let it go for today at least I won't be alone in this boring world.' Suzana chuckle.

Just then the assembly bell sounded... (ttrrrrrriiinnngggggggg...)

The students were always on time and stood according to their height in line during the assembly. They were aware of Madam Shelby and her consequences when the students disobeyed. Every student was scared of her. She was a monster in human form, wearing a large spectacle. Suzana and Comleng were laughing away and discussing Madam Shelby while on their way for assembly.

Madam Shelby who was in her late sixties was tall and huge, strong and independent woman. She has one son and a daughter, Mark thirty-five and Alice twenty-eight. Mark and Alice no longer stayed with her as they were employed at different places, earning well. Ma'am Shelby had become a widow five years ago, resulting in her crudeness and rudeness towards the students. She was the Principal of Goodwill Academy.

One awful morning, in a particular class, the teacher was absent and the students, as usual, were left uncontrolled, extremely noisy and disturbing the other classes. Ma'am Shelby was frustrated; she took her large cane stick which she always carried with her and started to randomly hit the students. One of the students was left bleeding and in an unconscious state due to several beatings. The teachers who saw it immediately rushed to the spot and took the student for medical aid. From then on no one in the school dared to mess with Ma'am Shelby.

Goodwill Academy was formed by Ma'am Shelby. It was not a very reputed institution. There were just a few teachers who took five to six classes each day, teaching different classes. The students were very few in number. Many students would transfer their school by the end of the year, by mid-year and some even after a month due to the cruelty of the Principal. Structurally also the school was poor. The classrooms were quite small, the desks had holes on

it, and benches meant for four pupils at the most squeezed in six students. The morning assembly was conducted outside and it was the best time to check on the students on their uniforms whether they are wearing it decently or indecently, the hairstyles, make ups etc.

The morning assembly was led by Sir Romeo He was a Math teacher. He was already married and he got into Goodwill Academy for few months. His wife worked as a science teacher in their hometown and they had a son studying in the same school where his mother taught. Sir Romeo was kind and friendly, humble and strict at times. He was the best teacher amongst all. During the assembly while Sir Romeo was giving a speech, there was a sudden outburst: 'Didn't I tell you to cut your hair?' shouted Ma'am Shelby from the back line pointing at a male student. He went numb, his face was pale and sweats started to drip from his forehead and all over his face, though it was cold.

'Yes ma'am' he said barely audible.

'Then? Why?' ma'am Shelby said stonily and she randomly cut his hair there itself. Ma'am Shelby always had a scissor in her hand while checking on students. The students stood aghast and the student turned red in anger and abashment. He was cursing Ma'am Shelby to dead. Ma'am Shelby gave him one last warning and the student did understand it without having her speak. Ever student was in pin drop silence when Ma'am Shelby moved forward and having caught another male student.

"You! What is wrong with your trouser? Did the authority give you the trouser stitched so tight?" Even before the student could speak, ma'am Shelby had cut open the trouser asking him to purchase and get a new trouser the next day. Then ma'am Shelby went up straight to where Sir Romeo was standing and asked the students to respect their Academy by wearing a decent uniform and she announced more brutal punishment if she finds students breaking the school rules. After her speech, the students dispersed and went to their respective classes. It was a rough morning with ma'am Shelby, a

gloomy day as the weather. The sun was shining low, the barren trees, no birds, just silent. It was the hot topic of the day that none wants to neither talk about it nor remember it. Some students were grateful that it was not them, some were sad because the concerned students were their friends and some were filled with anger and revenge raging inside.

'Suzana, Hurry up!' shouted Comleng, who was waiting near the school gate waiting for Suzana. 'Coming...' replied Suzana, who was talking with her cousin who lived on the other side. 'Okay bye, I'll see you tomorrow' saying this hurriedly to her cousin she quickly ran to Comleng. 'Why are you always in a hurry? I didn't even complete my words with my cousin and you are shouting here like I have been talking to her for an hour now' complained Suzana.

'Su, you know that I can't wait long for people' she looked at her.

'Yes, very well' she gave a quick reply.

They talked about the incident that happened that day on their way home. They sympathised with the two students and focused on the cruel treatment. They went on and on from one topic to another and soon they reached Suzana's place. It was a four storey building, painted white with fresh flowers on the balcony where beautiful butterflies lingered around. At the end of the day, it gave a warm sight.

'Com, why don't you come in?' asked Suzana 'I can drop you later.'

'No Su, thank you, I have to go. Mom is alone and I have to help her to get the meals on the table tonight. So maybe tomorrow... is that okay?' She smiled.

'Okay no problem, I understand. Come whenever you are free, I am always at home.'

'Okay, sure I'll get going... Bye...'

'Okay bye, bye... see you' Suzana waved from her entrance, watching Comleng disappear from her sight until she was gone and couldn't be seen.

While Comleng was on her way, she felt something unusual today, feeling that someone was watching her all this while. But she didn't bother, she went straight ahead but she kept thinking about the store where she felt strange for the first time. Days went by with the feeling of a mystery until one fine day.

'Oh no! Half past seven. I have to hurry up.' Rushing to the washroom, Comleng realise she was already late for class but she had to go, she shouldn't be missing class today. She tied her hair in on her way, wearing her tie and belt while carelessly carrying her bag on her shoulder. She was breathing heavily while she reached her school entrance. Ma'am Shelby stood there, giving a cold look to Comleng and questioned her.

'Why are you late?'

'Sorry ma'am' said Comleng as innocent as she could.

'What do you mean by sorry? Go back home', shouted back sternly.

Comleng was too scared to even swallow her saliva, she did not want to be embarrassed in front of the whole student so she gathered her guts and speaks to ma'am Shelby.

'I am really sorry ma'am; I didn't know that my clock was in a very bad conditionPlease let me in today, I won't make the same mistake again.'

Ma'am Shelby couldn't stand the reason given by Comleng but she let her in.

'No excuse next time, get in! Said ma'am Shelby walking away.

Comleng breathed heavily as a sign of relief and quickly rushed to her class. She saw Suzana coming for her with a worried face. Suzana was a girl who always cared for Comleng.

'Hey Com, I thought you weren't turning up today. What is wrong? You are late all the time.' Suzana asked her in a low tone.

Comleng could see how much Suzana wanted her company but she was way too concerned with her own, she felt guilty. Suzana and she would do all the crazy stuff together and Suzana would always be the one thanking Comleng at the end for making her life more fun. Comleng couldn't thank enough Suzana for all her help whenever she was in trouble. But Comleng was rather too busy that she never had time to tell Suzana all she had within her.

'Suzana, I woke up when it was half past seven. I thought I wouldn't turn up but since we have an important test today I had to. I couldn't miss it because there would be explanation call by Principal and I didn't want that. So, I had to rush and run as fast as I could and at the end I ended up with the Principal giving a lame excuse. Of course, she didn't believe me but she let me in for today and so I feel I am the luckiest girl alive today...' Comleng was explaining to her as if she had the most exciting adventure in her life, while Suzana just wondered if Comleng would ever change. At the end, all she could say to Comleng was,

'You will never change, Com.'

Comleng was in a good mood today; she behaved well and was kind to all her mates, unlike other days when she would randomly create trouble. Suzana and Comleng sat at the last bench, their favourite place since the first day. They would sit at the back and observe and study their mates. Every day they had different topics to talk about. Today Comleng couldn't keep herself from smiling. She decided that she would tell her story to Suzana because she deserved to know it since she is her best friend.

'Su, I have got to tell you something' she said excitedly.

Suzana was busy sketching, she was least bothered. 'What is it? She asked.

'Do you know the store which is just opposite to your building?' Comleng asked feeling stupid because that was the most stupid question.

Suzana looked confused. She turned to Comleng and said, 'Com, why wouldn't I know the store which is just opposite to my place. That's my favourite view. Anyway, what happen?' she continued sketching.

'You know, Su, I have always noticed a guy there inside the store. He is the eldest son of that particular store owner. I had a crush on him since my eighth grade. But the other day, the strange thing was that he was watching us and just after we said our goodbyes I noticed him and he pretended as though he wasn't watching when I caught him' She blushed.

'He might be your crush but you don't know who actually he is right? said Suzana.

Comleng was honest, 'Of course no' she said.

'Then forget it, Com' said Suzana who was less concerned about the matter.

Comleng on the other hand was surprised because she couldn't imagine how she could forget. She wanted Suzana to understand her.

'Su, I know he is a complete stranger but you see how easily can you say to forget him? It is already a couple of years now and...' Comleng was trying hard to let Suzana understand her but at the end she was speechless.

'Because you don't know him and he doesn't know you. He might have his girlfriend, what will you do then? It is an infatuation, don't be too serious about it, dear' said Suzana giving her final touch to her sketch.

Comleng was starting to get annoyed with Suzana because she could not understand her deep admiration. Comleng was always in a rush to see him before and after every class. But Comleng had never opened up this topic to anyone for the last two years except today to Suzana, but she was least bothered.

With each passing day, Comleng felt that her day was incomplete if she didn't see him. She didn't know even his name and where he is from. All that she knew was his the store where he helped out his mum. His mother was the manager of their store. Mrs Stella was a respected woman in the society. The name of the store was A-Z Store.

Comleng would happen to meet him at times coincidentally but she pretended and paid no heed while deep within she was always filled with regret for not even smiling or giving a glance at him. Comleng was sitting quietly beside Suzana, who was still busy. Suddenly she asked Comleng, 'Do you want his contact number?'

Comleng was left clueless, she was confused and she asked, 'Whose?'

'His number?' Suzana teased her smiling.

Comleng was even more surprised because all this time Suzana had been keeping a secret and a lot of questions started to pop up in her head.

'What do you mean, Su, you know him? She asked her curiously.

Suzana wasn't interested at all, 'don't worry I don't have contact with him nor number but I can get it for you if you want.'

Comleng couldn't hold her excitement, 'Oh... Su, I will be the happiest if you can' she hugged her. His name is Viz, by the way, said Suzana.

Suzana had known Viz because they are neighbours and the store and her building is opposite to each other. During weekend days she would sit on the balcony and watch the passersby, going in and out of the store in all seasons. The best thing about the store was that it provided various items ranging from groceries to clothing. It is under the supervision and care of Mrs Stella after her husband passed away. Suzana's parents and Viz's mother were very good friends. They would have dinner together discussing their business and families. Viz had a younger brother too. The two families had contacts of each of the members and that is how Suzana could get Viz's number. Suzana

and Viz were always in their own world and less concerned about what was going on between the two families. Their only conversation was during the two families' get-together evenings.

It was a beautiful morning, Comleng was up early. She was excited because finally, she was getting the contact number after two years. This morning she reached her school ten minutes earlier. The school looked deserted but peaceful. She couldn't wait for Suzana. Waiting for Suzana for half an hour felt like she had been waiting for a year, each minute seemed to be an hour long. She walked to her class and waited for Suzana, slowly and gradually the other students started to come. Finally, Suzana arrived. This time it was Comleng who went to meet Suzana. Comleng was very excited.

'Good morning, Su! Did you get it?' she asked happily.

'Here it is' Su handed out to Comleng a neatly folded piece of paper.

Comleng never felt this before. She was way too excited and her heart was pounding harder and harder with every time that she unfolded the paper. She looked at the paper and to Suzana again and again. Comleng hugged Suzana that Suzana could hardly breathe and she thanked her again and again. Comleng asked more information about Viz to Suzana and she told as much as she knew.

'His name is Viz. he is currently an Engineering student. He is in the final year and will be appearing his exam soon. He is a bright student. He respects and loves his mum very much. His dad passed away when he was still very young. He has a younger brother and being the eldest he is hardworking and a responsible man. That's all I know.' said Suzana to Comleng who was listening patiently with whole attention to Su.

Comleng quickly coming back to her sense, said 'okay, thank you!' and smiled at her.

Comleng wasn't fully satisfied with Suzana's information. She was in doubt as to why Viz didn't go for his class because she sees him in the store all the time.

'So, he doesn't go to class? because I see him in the store almost all the time' said Comleng.

'Yes, about that. The store is under the supervision of his mum. She is a very busy person having appointments and meetings and the employees there are not very efficient to look after the store. So, Viz who is very good in disciplining the workers and in treating the customers is entrusted by his mom whenever she is gone. Many customers say that Viz should be the manager instead but both Mrs Stella and Viz himself feels that he need to focus more on his own studies. Comleng was nodding her head and Suzana encouraged her saying 'he is a good person, you can contact him.'

'Okay, sure' said Comleng smiling.

Comleng was planning to talk to him in the evening. She couldn't wait for her class to get over. She was feeling nervous thinking about it. She was thinking about how to start a conversation over the phone when she calls him. She was in her deep thought not listening to what the teacher was explaining, the bell woke her up from her thoughts. Like other days Comleng quickly walked back home while Suzana stayed a little over the school for some work. While Comleng was on her way, she quickly glanced inside the store but she didn't find him. That didn't bother her because she got his number. Comleng reached her place exhausted from all the excitement. She did all the works that needed to be done as fast as she could: helping Jakie and Lucy in their studies, helping her mum in placing the dinner for their family. The family had a hearty meal and it was a quarter to eight. Comleng was in her bedroom thinking over and over again whether to call Viz or not. She felt that it wasn't appropriate for a girl to call first but the line 'he isn't like any other guy' said by Suzana compelled and tempted her to call him. After thinking hard and long for at least half an hour she dialled the number. Her heart was pounding

faster and she could feel it. The line on the other side was ringing. She felt weak suddenly, she was regretting the call and prayed that he won't pick the call but she couldn't hang up.

'Hello?' spoke the voice on the other end. She heard his voice for the first time and she was already in love with his masculine voice.

'Hey... Hi!' she said shutting her eyes tight, full of confusion and in a blank state.

'May I know you?' asked the voice.

But Comleng wasn't ready to reveal herself. She didn't speak, she was breathing heavily. She tried to find words to speak but couldn't.

'How can I help you? Is it about the stuff you ordered?' asked the voice from the other end,

'No' said Comleng still finding words to speak.

'No?' asked Viz sounding confused.

At the end Comleng took a deep breath and spoke up gathering all her guts.

'Um... It's me Suzana's friend' Comleng spoke and was thinking what to say next. Will he hang up? Will he tag me as a cheap girl? Will he be angry with Suzana? And lots of questions began to pop up before he spoke.

'Suzana's friend?' said Viz in a guessing tone.

Comleng was happy for a minute that he didn't know her because at this state she didn't want him to identify her. There was a pause for about ten seconds. Then she heard, 'okay so the one with bob hair, who goes and come to school with Suzana every day?' and he laughed.

Comleng was surprised by his description because she never thought he was observing her. Whenever Comleng would look in, he would either be too busy with the customers or walk up and down, managing the store.

'I am surprised that you know me' she said.

'Of course, I don't know you in person but Suzana tells me about you and I always see Suzana and you all the time so it wasn't hard for me to guess.' He said laughing away.

Viz and Comleng continued talking, knowing about their families, their studies, institutes and all they had to know about. To Comleng it wasn't like any other night. She felt like she has found her missing piece which had been missing for years. It was already half past eleven but she felt like only five minutes had passed. She laid awake with her phone on her right ear, through her window she could see the stars shinning bright and the moonlit shone into her room. Everything is so beautiful tonight, she thought.

'Okay, I think it's late, so take a good rest and see you tomorrow' said Viz.

Comleng was still lost in her thoughts and suddenly she replied, 'Okay, good night' and smiled.

Seconds, minutes, hours, days, and months passed by as Viz and Comleng's late night conversation continued and they became closer and closer. They shared their thoughts, ideas and emotions and how they spent their day. They would talk for hours and hours and Comleng could not believe that this was real. She felt like a dream. Viz on the other hand too was having a strange feeling because he had never felt this way for a long time. He wasn't sure and every single day he felt the need to talk to Comleng. Even for 'yes' or 'no'. During weekends they would hang out, visit parks, have coffee, and at times Viz takes Comleng for shopping. They couldn't deny that they enjoyed each other's company but never admitted. Time and days were short but their feelings increase. Their friendship has been three months now, 'How time changes everything' is what Comleng would always say to Viz.

Suzana and Comleng were as always best of friends. During weekends and vacations, they would spend in each other's place in turns sharing their love life, their secrets, talking about families and so on. Comleng would always listen to Suzana in every way as all her advice seems to work better than Comleng. For Comleng this was her first love, and has never been so close and confined to anyone until Viz. She had never kept any boyfriends. She had a crush on Viz since her grade eight and till now. She still had a crush on him though they had become good friends. She didn't want him just as a friend but to be with him forever; not a minute or a second was worth spent without him by her side but she still waited for him to speak.

Suzana and Comleng were in their class and they were seated at the last bench as usual. Right now they were discussing friendship of Comleng and Viz, and Comleng was happy as usual narrating how every day she is happy because of him.

'Su..., Viz is a great guy. He is friendly, lovable, and wise. I am lucky to have met and be his friend and I thank you because you were always there. But Su, as you know my feeling for him differs, he might consider me as his good friend but every time we are together I always wish that the moment stops for eternity. I am afraid if he doesn't feel the same for me...' Suzana tenderly placed his hands over Comleng's and encouraged her, 'Speak it out, Com, maybe he feels the same for you but is afraid of rejection and don't want to be in the same depression he was. Few years ago Viz had a girlfriend. Their life was smooth sailing without any waves. Everybody envied their relationship, and many believed that they would last and make a perfect couple. Both the families knew about their relationship and were happy about it. But there came a thunderstorm. There was an arrangement for their engagement; the date was set on the girl's birthday, the place where they often spent their time together was their venue, it was set to be a grand engagement but the dreams and wishes came trampling down into million bits when they heard the news that his girlfriend had eloped with one of Viz's

employers. There were no letters to be found and no clues about them. This news shocked everyone in the family including the girl's but they kept it under cover. The news hurt Viz so much that he is still mending himself from the wounds. The wounds are gone but the scars, he still carries.'

Comleng looked at Su in a shock and said, 'but he never mentioned this to me.'

'Because his scars are fresh and until it is healed he won't take another step. So it is up to you Comleng,' said Su reassuringly.

The day went by quickly and their class was over by now. They walked to Suzana's place and began to talk about it more and everything.

'But I can't be the one, Su' said Comleng.

'Why? Any problem?' asked Su.

'It is because I don't want it to be me all the time... I was the one, who took the step of approaching him, the first time, then saying stuff like how he was my crush since grade eight. You know Su, I hate myself and I don't want to hate anymore... if life wants it then it will.' shot Comleng feeling frustrated with herself.

Suzana held Comleng in her arms and comforted her 'how long will you wait for him, dear. He will be going for his further studies soon. The sooner you confess it the better, rather than keeping the feelings hidden inside. Feelings are flames that keep burning until we let it out if not you are torn apart inside. There is no meaning to life after that.' Comleng wept bitterly in Suzana's arms because she wasn't sure of herself with lots of questions like why? How?... Suzana tried her best to comfort her and help her feel better. Comleng on the other hand, was saddened by the news that Viz will be leaving soon and she couldn't imagine that. Suzana and Comleng were together till evening. They had their time trying to figure out the best ways they can. Su comforted Com, saying that everything will be okay.

By late evening they said their goodbyes and Comleng was already on her way home. Comleng wasn't happy at all. She was in her room trying to figure out everything but everything seemed to annoy her, it made it worst. Suddenly she began to feel lonely which she had never felt in her life. She tried to fall asleep though it was early but she was wide awake. She kept tossing every direction but it was too soon to fall asleep. Just then her phone buzzed, she looked at it and it was Viz. she hesitated a little whether to pick or not but her phone kept ringing again and again and she didn't know for how long.

'Yes,' she answered sounding calm.

'Hi!' he said sounding excited. 'Um.. I have a surprise, want to come with me? He asked.

Comleng was not ready for any surprises or excitements. She just wanted to be alone and be by herself. She had no strength and courage to face the world pretending everything was fine while she was dying inside.

'Hey... I would love to but I am really sorry, I am not in my right mind now and it is late ... maybe some other time...' replied Comleng.

'Are you alright?' asked Viz quite surprised because Comleng was always the one to come up with ideas.

'I am alright but, I don't think...' before even she could complete her sentence Viz interrupted her, 'But, but, but... no excuses, I am on my way so get dressed.'

Comleng couldn't refuse because he was already on his way and maybe sooner or later, they are going to be apart. Even if she longs for his company and wants to be with him he will be gone and so she decided to get dressed and go. She didn't apply any makeup unlike other days, she wore a simple tee which, she had no problem in choosing unlike those days when she would have a problem deciding what to wear, which dress, which shirt will go

with which pants and shoe, and what not. Tonight she got out in a simple tee and her dark trouser, her hair had grown and she let it loose, her eyes almost weak from crying. She walked out of her room and her phone buzzed again, it was Viz, she answered and there was Viz waiting for her.

'Hi, Com, feeling better?' asked Viz helping her get inside the car.

Comleng gave a weak smile and asked, 'So where are we going?'

'Place you have never seen' joked Viz trying to cheer her up.

'Promise me that we will be back soon' said Comleng.

Viz knew that it will be bad on his part to joke further. So, he said, 'okay, if that's what you want.'

It was nine o'clock and was dark. The wind was blowing, it was drizzling, some people were hurrying back home, some young ones walked hand in hand enjoying the moment, the leaves of the trees were dancing away with the wind blowing softly as a music. Comleng felt that the nature on some part understood her feelings. It began to weep and at the same time being in joy. Viz was driving, he wanted to talk about his further studied but he didn't because he knows how he feels and it will hurt Comleng more. He didn't speak a word while driving. After few directions, he parked his car on the other side and took a deep breath.

'Here we are' he said getting out of his car and coming on the other side to help Comleng by opening the door for her. As she steps out, it was a different world. It was the most beautiful place she had ever seen. It was as if she had travelled all the way for a century and had come to the end of the world to locate a piece of heaven on earth. The river was shining and sparkling as though the diamonds were in there, the pebbles could be seen clearly, the trees were whispering, the sand beneath her feet was never like before. With ever step she took it felt as soft as cotton. She was mesmerised by the view and nothing felt more wonderful and amazing than her time with Viz alone in

the long lost heaven. Viz who was beside her was observing every step she took.

'This is my favourite place' he said and continued 'a place in times of despair and sadness; this is the place I share with. The river listens and takes away my pain along with them. The trees hear me and blow away my worries. No one utters a word but it relieves me. I would cry my heart out, scream as the world fall apart because some painful moments are the hardest to erase, hardest to forget, and life has to move on. I have lived them all, through the hardest, through the worst, through the hell and here I am still'.

Comleng looked around, 'this place is breath-taking, I have never seen such a beauty in any place that I have come across. A beauty that holds painful experiences within' she smiled, 'maybe I would be the one to visit this place often from now on'.

Viz took Comleng by her hand and walked towards the river. There were stones large and flat, Viz was completed to sit on the stone over-viewing the river while Comleng decided to feel the softness of the sand and sat on it. She closed her eyes relaxing like she had won the greatest battle.

Neither of them talked, they remain in silence because deep down they weren't fine. They didn't want the night to be memories but last forever, they didn't want memories but to go on and keep moving alive. Tears filled Comleng's eyes, but she quickly wiped it with the back of her hand not letting Viz notice it. Viz on the other hand, was feeling lonely and he didn't understand why. He started to miss Comleng already but he was too stubborn to admit it. He went over and sat beside Comleng. He took out a tiny bottle with two small pieces of paper neatly tied. He took out his pen and handed it to Comleng. She was surprised and wondered as to why he had brought these stuff.

'Write your name on the paper' he said.

'Why?' she asked sounding confused. But she wrote it and gave it to Viz. He wrote on the other paper for quite some time, he then rolled it, and carefully slipped the two pieces of papers in the tiny bottle. He took the thing and went over to the stone where he was sitting earlier and placed the tiny bottle in such a way that not even a hurricane will carry it away. Then he came over and sat beside Comleng. She was still confused and asked, 'why?' He smiled at her assuring. He held her hand, their fingers intermingled. She could feel the shock of electricity running through her veins; all her cells were death, her blood froze, her heart stopped beating for a second... she had never felt this feeling before. How amazing and wonderful it was to hold your love even for a moment, if this was forever it would be bliss, she thought. Viz on the other, hand never wanted to let go of her hand. He had never felt so warm and promising in his life but he still didn't get it. He wanted someone by his side when he finally closed his eyes like now yet he wasn't sure if it will be Comleng.

'You know Com,' he finally spoke up. 'Now that I have your name and mine marked safely in the bottle, protected by the strongest stone, I believe this will cure me more easily of the pain and suffering that I came across, because for once in my life I got a very good and understanding girl like you. It will bring me happiness. Thank you' he uttered softly looking away. Comleng didn't say anything. It was already too late and she wanted to go home soon. 'When are you leaving?' she asked him suddenly. 'Leaving? Where?' he asked without any hint. 'I mean for you higher studies' she said.

'Well, I am not sure about that yet. Why? Want me to leave soon?' he teased her.

'I hope you don't forget me... even if you find a good woman, we can still be friends. Right?' she pulled back her hand from his and smiled at him.

Viz was suddenly choked. He had no words to say. He didn't want her to feel that way. He wanted her to understand that for all his life he has been

waiting for a woman he wanted and then she came around. But he was obvious that he will be leaving soon and he didn't want to leave breaking her heart. He just couldn't say right, about how he would wake up early to watch her go to school and at times came back early from his college to see her. He would re-read the conversations every morning which they had over the night to brighten his day. The more they got close the more he kept thinking about her constantly. He knew that he was lost in her soul. He turned and gazed at her beautiful eyes and said, 'You are the most beautiful being I have ever met, Com, the most trusted one to turn to and the one I would always love to have by my side. There is no way that I will forget you in my entire life. Even if we are miles and miles apart, distance doesn't matter, our friendship does. Comleng, I just want you to understand that I am the eldest child and I am responsible for the family and that is the reason why I am leaving.' I will walk out of your life for a moment but I promise I will be back soon for you. If only you are willing to wait for me for a little longer.'

Comleng couldn't bear to hear him say all those words. She was so much in pain, she wanted to be home and cry as much as she wanted and as loud as she could.

'I am glad that you are doing this for your family and your future. And no matter what I will always be waiting for you and to meet as a grown, matured and responsible' She said trying to sound normal. 'I think we should leave, it time to get back home' she said as the tears rolled down her beautiful cheeks as she felt like her heart was struck by a sword.

'Okay...' he said, going to get his car.

They were already inside the car and none of them spoke on the way. It didn't take much time to reach Comleng's place as there were not many vehicles and was smooth enough to get within few minutes. Viz stopped by Comleng's entrance, she got out of the car and thanked Viz. 'I had a great time Viz thank you, and will catch up later on phone. Till then drive home

safe' and she waved. Viz waved and he reached his place. He was tired and as he got in Mrs Stella was on the dining table arranging it. 'Where have you been? Let's have dinner...' she said softly.

'Okay, in a minute', he said and went to shower.

Mrs Stella was waiting for him and Viz's brother was in his room. Viz came out and walked towards the table for dinner. They had their dinner discussing matters regarding the store and how it was going. After the dinner, 'Viz your ticket has been booked, tomorrow at 1:00 p.m the flight will take off' said Mrs Stella. Viz was dumbstruck, he didn't know that he was going to leave so early. He was mad at his mum for not concerning him on this matter. 'Tomorrow?' you should have asked me about it, and I am not a kid anymore, I can book myself' he said stubbornly.

'There is no choice, dear. I know that you can do it but when I inquired about the flight and checked out the institutions, we were late. It is either you go tomorrow or you don't go for your studies because the tickets have been booked for the next couple of months and if you wait for that it will be too late. Your ticket was booked because I knew the people there, it is impossible to get it simply.' He left the table and went to his bedroom. All he could think of was about leaving tomorrow. He was frustrated, angry and mad. He prayed that it was a nightmare but it wasn't. He couldn't think of anything. He dialled Comleng's number and she picked it within a second.

'Hey...'

'Hi'

'You alright?' she asked.

'Not at all' he replied and he meant it.

'What is wrong?' she asked concerned.

'I am leaving tomorrow, Com' he closes his eyes hoping it was still a dream.

Comleng's world was shattered into pieces that none could fix it. 'Tomorrow?' she asked surprised.

'Yes tomorrow, the tickets have been booked till next couple of months and if I have to wait, I will be too late. Right now I am confused' said Viz.

'Viz, it's alright. You don't have to make any choices here. Be it tomorrow, next month, you are going to leave no matter what for the same reason. It is better you go and achieve your dreams before it's late' she encouraged him.

'Thank You, com for your encouragement. I will look forward.' He didn't want to leave Comleng. He wanted to throw away his dreams and be with her for the rest of his life but his love for Mrs Stella wasn't less because she was his mentor, guide, friend and above all his mum whom he loved so much and could never disappoint her. He also at times realised that his career is as important as Comleng is to him.

Comleng was afraid of losing him. He would be gone far away and she was afraid that he will slowly forget her because of his new friends. She would be replaced. He would stop missing her. He will lose contact and at the end forget her. She kept replaying how she would drown in their memories when he is gone. They hung up early tonight.

Finally, after a long struggle, she fell asleep. It was a beautiful morning but not for Comleng. She woke up early running her hands under the pillow searching for her phone. She called Viz but he didn't pick so she just left a voice message. As usual, she had her breakfast and left for class. She looked inside the store but didn't see him.

Mrs Stella was in tears at the airport. It was already time for Viz to go. She hugged him and told him that everything he is doing is for his good. She asked him to call her as soon as he reached his place. Viz as always was cool. He comforted his mum and waved her goodbye and Viz disappeared from her sight gradually.

Viz with a heavy heart was arranging his bag, took his seat and settled down. There was an announcement that the flight will be taking off in a few minute, he took out his phone and saw a voice message. He was too busy to even hold his phone until now. He listened to the message and he couldn't stop smiling. Her voice was sleepy and lazy. 'Viz. I know you are still asleep.. I tried calling you many times... but you didn't pick. Anyway, I will be in class and I won't be able to talk to you later... so, safe journey. Don't forget me (giggles) and see you soon...'

Just then there was an announcement, 'All of you are requested to be seated and remain calm as the plane will be taking off in few seconds.'

Eight Years Later

Suzana was in such a hurry. She was in a party. The guests were arriving, and it was getting more crowded. She didn't even have her breakfast and she was still busy in her work and still to do. She was running around going and checking out if the cooks were getting along so that everything must be on time: the drinks to be served around, whether the flowers have been placed in an apple pie order. Today, the day was in her hand. Looking back from now, she had become a woman who is more responsible. After her graduation, she went to study interior designing course and now she has it in her fingers. She had also received an award for best creativity in the first year of her studies itself. She was now a famous event planner, who was been hired by well-known people, entrepreneurs, large companies, for weddings etc.

After Suzana has done all her arrangements, she rushed to Comleng who was in her room. Comleng was upstairs. Both Comleng and Suzana did their graduation together but were separated for their further studies in different fields. Comleng in due course cracked the exam and now she was in the administrative field. She did celebrate her success with all her friends and a

family except for Viz. Jackie was now in an engineering field and Lucy was doing her course in fashion designing. Comling's parents were very proud of them.

As Suzana went in to check Comleng, she couldn't find Comleng more beautiful than ever. She wore a white dress with flower neatly designed all over above her lace dress that fell like a waterfall on the floor. She had her crimson hair fall on her shoulder. It was her day and she looked like one. Suzana had her mouth wide open and her hand on her mouth when she first saw Comleng. 'You look so beautiful... Com' she whispered. 'I am so happy for you. I have always been by your side and I know how hard it has been for you looking back. But your life is better now and I am really proud of you' she continued and it indeed shocked me when I heard the news that I was the one to be planning for your big day huh... amazing...' she smiled and hugged Comleng.

'Thank you, Su. You have been my best friend and will always be. I couldn't think of letting my day pass without your presence and today I am having all of that. You are so great dear, thank you so much...' they joked and talked about the day's events and the arrangements. 'It is my pleasure to be here for you on your big day. Congratulations dear Com and I wish you a happy life with Nick...' Su kissed her on the cheek and hugged her.

'Happy life? Su, it is just an engagement' she joked. 'Su, I shouldn't say this but I have to. If Viz was to come back for me he would have kept in touch with me no matter what. I tried but in vain. It's been eight years and I wasn't even sure when Nick asked for my hand but I realised that I should move on... Su, I am a betrayer...' Comleng wept as she said these words.

'You can't say that Com, be happy you can't rely on your past memories and drag them into your new life now. There is nothing such as betraying...' she hugged her and comforted her. 'The guests are downstairs waiting for

you, come on, you can't sit here sobbing...it's your day... be the happiest.'

Su and Com went together.

Comleng was getting engaged to her childhood friend Nick. They had been together few years before Suzana move in. He and Comleng were neighbours. Nick was tall with strong structure, well build body, and his eyes were darkish brown, hair perfectly and nicely combed at the back. He did his Masters abroad in the field of investigation. Now he played a major role in crime investigations. He was always an intelligent boy. He would outwit all his mates. He had knee interest in studying in the field of investigations. He was working abroad but has come home for two years regarding his work. He met Comleng and he fell in love with her.

Suzana was taking care of all the events for their engagement.

Viz was in his room. A multi-storey complex which was the most talked about in the city. He was seated at his table with the phone in his hand seriously into it. He had files piled up at his right-hand side and papers scattered all over on his table. He had already completed his course and was the director of the multi-storey complex.

'Sir, we have a client waiting for you outside' said a steward who was in his forties. He was the most trusted and humble steward of Viz.

'I am busy, so next week' said Viz still on his phone.

'But Sir, they said it is urgent. They want you for the designs of the mansion they are going to build' said the steward humbly.

'They are waiting for me; I am leaving for my place. Till then take care of the stuff and clients before I am back.' He patted him and hurriedly took his coat which was in his chair, takes his bag and goes out.

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The steward was confused, 'When are you returning? Don't you need someone to accompany you?'

'No, I am fine; when I am back I won't be alone anymore. I will be back with my lady' saying that he smiled and waved at his steward.

The steward was not sure what his Boss meant; he looked through the office after Viz had left. On the wide wall towards the right, there was a large portrait of a lady with bob hair, curve eyelashes with chocolate brown eyeballs. The boundaries were designed with flower beautifully curved and magically painted. It had letters inscribed, the steward looked closely and it read, "Comleng."

A mother's vision beyond Keats's Negative Capability

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Pulling out the drawer for Mrs. Freda has always been so easy, serving multi functions. When in hurry it was one of the best ways to keep outer surface tidy by simply tugging in stuffs inside the drawer and there is tidiness-just a pull away.

However lately, opening the drawer has become an effort. Now, Mrs. Freda had each drawer sealed with drawers-safe mechanism. Earlier if accidentally a finger got jammed, an 'Ouch' and a curse would have been sufficient- but now Mrs. Freda knows those are going to be replaced by heart breaking sight of her child crying.

Mrs. Freda ensured the safety of her child in every possible ways- medications, ointment, lotion, cream, mosquito repellent patch, powder puff, bath seat, head protection, shower hat, corner safety, locker safety, purified water the list goes on with anti skit socks on the list to buy. Mrs. Freda looked around and checked on everything and was pleased. With a peaceful mind she went about having little Chit-chats and unfortunately the Chit-chats centered on the incomprehensible meaningless conflict, pain and suffering that mankind had imposed upon humanity itself. Somehow disturbed, Mrs. Freda decided to distract her thoughts (thoughts about how her baby will grow up fighting against her own kind, her thoughts tormented with fear on the thoughts of her darling's future) by turning on the idiot box. In the idiot box, the verbal had become visual. Every news channel featured the topsy-turvy environment, miseries piled upon miseries. Mrs. Freda found herself at a dilemma- she had brought the head protection gear and was on her way to get hold of anti-skit socks, but How! How! How will she protect her child against the world?- she found no answer, she felt numb, the only thing she

could feel was the warm saltiness on her countenance which seems to be incessant, wipe away one only to give way to another drop.

Mrs. Freda tried hard to find a way out, an answer to her apprehension, an escape route just as John Keats, but both knew that they could not be escapists. Keats through his concept of Negative Capability settles for capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubt, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.

Mrs. Freda pondered over Keats's life and the concept of Negative Capability. She wondered if Keats should have searched deeper for an answer instead of being satisfied with the capability of being in doubts. She wondered if Keats had missed out on an important aspect of life. Rather than being satisfied with the idea of living in doubt, would Keats life have been different if he had the Faith. Keats was in want for a direction that solidified permanence but he could not come to that conclusion, hence stopped at Negative Capability; nothing could have been more permanent than the Faith. As Mrs. Freda meditated more and more on Keats and her own apprehension the vision became clearer and clearer. She had done the best that she could do. Now the important task left was to have the Faith. She realised she could unload her burden anytime for there was SOMEONE ever willing to carry the load for her. Her eyes opened to the futility of her worries. Rather than soiling and soaking a piece of cloth, she knew she had to be on her knee with folded hands and have the Faith. Her thoughts flashed back again to Keats and she wondered if things could have been different if Keats had someone to lead and guide him to replace Negative Capability with the FAITH.

PHOTOGRAPHY

"Photography is a way of feeling, of touching, of loving. What you caught on film is captured forever....It remembers little things, long after you have forgotten everything." Aaron Siskind





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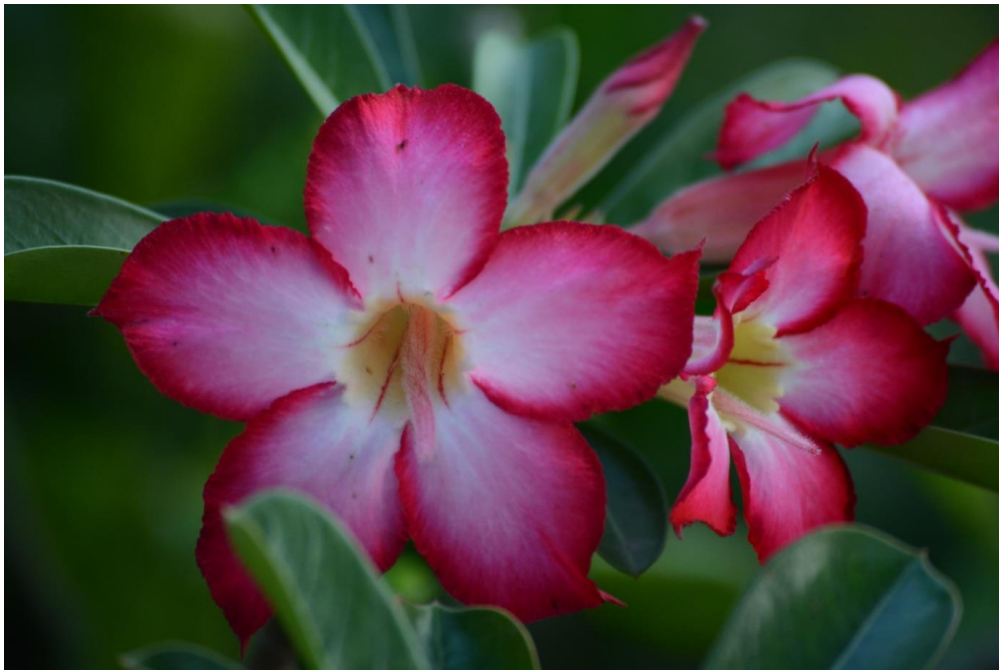
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