

Past or Prejudice

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“Why doesn’t he consider my feelings?” always echoes throughout my thoughts.

As I walk down the dirt path I see almost all life dwindling from the cold winter weather. Nature has its own relentless torture it inflicts upon the weak in this world. It is sad, but I do not mourn for the pain of the trees, as they do not mourn for me. We share each other’s pain. Just like this oak, I have no choice except to allow torment that is handed to me. I have no escape; human society holds me down like the Earth grasping my roots. At least I shall live forever, or until my God decides I no longer deserve it.

Traveling down this path I realize that my surroundings appear more joyful the farther I get from my bed. I awake every morning on a rusted spring cot covered in dust from the wood rotting away off the roof of my shack. Leaving my quarters I step onto the path that leads to my Master’s home. Near the shack the trail is laden with rocks from the past and sticks from the trees that are unfortunate enough to stand there. The farther down the path, the more life that is seen. The trees begin to show leaves and the dirt is replaced with grass. At the end of the trail there is a mansion, the proof that my God is above me. This facade does not fool me. I imprisoned the beauty that exists near the mansion. I am forced by my Master to incarcerate life in the same hell that I am trapped.

I live in hell for sins my Master committed before I existed. I must pay for his moral crimes in a heaven where the guilty is God and the innocent serve him as if he were Satan. Like all hells there is no escape, if they do not find me, nature will.

A cold wind blows and my black skin grows bumpy from the chill. The frigid breeze burns my chest through my tattered cotton shirt. Without a coat

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to protect me from illness or good shoes to prevent the rocks from sinking into my bruised feet, I will not perform well in my forced labors today. I know when I arrive at the mansion my master will unleash his wrath upon my body and my absent soul.

The wind whistles through the air as if it is whispering taunts of freedom straight to my core. The force of this gust makes my back ache. This stinging pain is from the vengeance I received yesterday. Plowing the fields pushed me to my limit; I could not stand up any longer. I fell onto my chest hoping my Master was not watching, but he was. Before I could return to my feet, I felt my back strain in tension. The warm metal head of my owner's hoe was being forced into my back. The steel plate punctured my skin, tearing gashes out of my body as it was pulled away. After a few excruciating minutes of my consequence, he came down with one last furious blow that chipped into my spine. When the punishment halted, I realized I must move or my lesson might continue. I stood and finished plowing the fields. The stray dirt in the air seized my wounds as a reminder to finish my work rather than allow my physical-self unneeded rest.

"Why doesn't he consider my feelings?" still lingers in my mind.

Walking hunched over through this young, but already decrepit society, I feel I must fantasize of a life where I could hold my head up high. It would be a marvelous dream to live in a world where I was a human being that deserved rights and they were the filthy sinners. What would it be like to be considered a man rather than an animal, to answer out of respect rather than duty, to know my family personally? I am the new generation of the oppressed, maybe one day I too will be a normal person.

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I used to daydream about many things, but now I only imagine freedom. I lost hope many years ago and now believe it will ever be my turn. I still think about it just to show myself that I am alive. Without dreams there is no fear, without fear there is no pain, and without pain there is no life.

Now I stand before this immense house bathed in white paint, the color of all that has been good throughout their revised history. The cracks in the paint have been covered in another coat, creating a mangled appearance for the home of my Master's family. This sight is knotting up my stomach as it always does, unfortunately I do not adapt to fear.

I breathe in and take a step toward my prison. Now on the porch, I have no thoughts, except my psyche's scar, my only true query. I am prepared to serve my Master, my father, my God. This is my place in society; I am foreign to them and therefore must bow down.

The door opens and I see myself, the same dark skin, same brown eyes, same exact body. "Where the hell were you Dupling?" he says as he breathes my own foul breath in my face. "The servant's quarters are only a five minute walk!" I feel his fist crushing into my ribs before his sentence has left my ears. Why won't he consider my feelings?

I fall to the ground and the dirt of the unswept porch fills my lungs, a sting that my body has grown accustomed to. Crouching on the floor, I realize I cannot hold my rage any longer. I will regret my words, but I cannot help it. I will get an answer.

Tears streaming down my face, I am screaming my heart to him. "Don't say you will fix this injury because I know you won't, not until I'm nearly dead. To you I am just your little dupling. I am not a human, as far as

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you are concerned. I am just your clone, your helpless servant, your soulless toy. Can you not realize I have feelings? I spend my entire life serving you and hating you, but I must love you because you are me. I know it was you that manifested my body and brain, but you still have no compassion. Your God is caring, why isn't mine?" I wish I could say more, but my jaw has been stomped into the porch. My warm salty blood drips onto my tongue; the familiar comfort that he knows I must repent. I cannot feel the beating anymore, my nerves have shut down. At least now he will regenerate my wounds, even my God is forgiving.

Unable to move my body, I can hear my master yelling. "I gave you life. It was my DNA they put into that tube. You would not exist without me, the original. I let you live, I pay to replace your injured parts, I even give you food and shelter, but you are ungrateful. Why don't you consider my feelings?"

He's right. I never do. Now I have my answer.