

THE RED CURTAINS

by:

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Thud... Thud... Thud...

The beat echoes inside me. A tiny raindrop of winter cold sweat sails through my head, dripping down to my face. Eyes wide yet blinded by the light. My entire is body engulfed in fabric of darkness. An ornament adorned in my head where a single string hangs as if it were me hanging on a cliff holding on tight to the vine. Suddenly it was so silent... breaking the solemn air, I heard my name.

Grand as it may seem, the moment we were born, the gears of fate have spun. The die has been cast, and we were in dire need to learn. We boarded the engine of life. The essentials were easy to adopt. To our first word may be Mama, Papa, or anything about our parents. The first word we might have written was our name, a dinosaur, a cartoon character, or a family member. We were able to wiggle, crawl, stand and fall, eventually walk and run.

Grazing the horizons, we were always on the move. A steam train following a track.

Gradually we reach preschool, grade school, high school, college and suddenly the track we follow suddenly seems to divide into multiple paths covered in mist. Filled with uncertainty, filled with intersections crossing the tracks of other people, people we love, people we know, people unrelated to us, they all connect leading to the same destination.

Graduation is a rite of passage and the right of every learner's life. May it be elementary, high school or college, years of holding the pen tight, carving the paper with

lead and ink, listening, enduring, staying up during reviews, tears, sweat and sacrifice, they very well deserve it.

Granting our dreams ourselves we pursue it, and long for it. Sometimes, we need to stop to wipe our tears, the steam that makes the engine work. As other times we need to rest our wheels and halt. Most times, we need to refuel our coal- our motivation. Most of us need to scream the pain away like the whistle of the train as loud as possible and emptying the excess we want to cast aside.

Graduation is an important ceremony. Due to the pandemic, most graduations were held online. However, the steady decline of cases and the gradual adaption to the new normal, a face-to-face graduation can be held, albeit following safety procedures, just in-case.

Grandiose... majestic...magnificent...we were told that school is fun, yet the truth is not for all. Studying is hard. Studying is long. Nevertheless, it is a path that is always in constant locomotion. Like a locomotive chugging along, we take everything head-on. Stress in academics, pressure from family, heart breaks and broken promises-we all carry all of those in our wagons ever-so-agon.

Thud... Thud... Thud...

The engine slows down, the bells start to ring, Chooo-Chooo. We have reached our destination. I'm sweating, eyes are open towards the blinding light. Wearing my white toga along with the white mortar board with a dangling string. It was quiet. I heard my name "Would you please come up to the stage"

Red curtains open, I step forth to the stage, shaking their hands, claiming my diploma. A crowd of clapping hands, overthrowing the triumphant march of aida, the graduation music. The air was cold, yet it felt warm. Some are smiling, some are crying

yet most are proud. I step forth beside our school principal. With tears and a smile adorned in my face. "With high honors, let us give a round of applause to. "

References:

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