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Participant Code: 443

In Search of Self.

The time kept moving - in it's own - predetermined pace, insouciant about any living beings. A damsel stood sipping on her coffee, scrutinizing the unfinished artwork on the canvas, clamped onto an easel. Soft vintage amber lights adorned the beige walls of the house. On a tiny sabinwood table, stood a statuette by Plodion. The girl's jaded pair of eyes, held no hope nor did it scintillate as she smiled. They say youth is something we will never have again, thus it is a treasure, that us, humans made of plethora of dichotomies should hold close. But to Jennie, it sounded quite ludicrous. She was stuck in this endless loop of pseudoliberalism, unable to escape. Lost, in this endless ocean of time that kept consuming her.





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Cherry blossoms wither but they blossom again. The laburnams will be as honey-coloured and flamelike as it is next June. The tides would rise and fall again. But youth! It won't stay. The rush of joy and adrenaline in our twenties becomes languid with passing time. Our limbs fail, senses rot. We degenerate into hideous puppets haunted by the memories of lost passions and exquisite temptations that we had not the courage to yield to. To live as an artist was certainly not easy and Jennie knew that. The latter had known the struggles of parents from her own family and being labelled as a 'forlorn' in the pandemonium titled society. The point of living was a question that she had yet to find the answer to. A warm breeze gently shoked-

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- her skin as the wind blew away  
her thoughts to a thousand miles.  
The last bitterness of the last dregs  
of her coffee was akin to the taste  
of life. Jennie held the brush as she  
stared at her unfinished chiaroscuro  
painting of a woman. Honey swam  
around the artwork's pupils akin to  
a murky lake of dusts as the artist  
blended it into perfection. It held  
warmth and empathy. The exquisite smile  
that spread across the artwork's face  
felt like a comforting embrace. Hours and  
hours went by as the artist finally  
had a smile spread across her own  
face as she proudly caressed the canvas.  
The woman in her art had an  
intriguing, elusive and soul shattering charm.





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The warm presence of the artwork could heal her, the damsel thought as she chuckled. The latter closed her feline eyes, wishing. "Oh, aphrodite! how I wish this painting could be brought to life..." The girl found her own remark to be comical. It was indeed imbecilic. The blissful damsel contacted the curator to check out her new artwork. This might actually be a turning point in her life. Jennie covered her painting with a veil as she went outside. This time with contentment and a gentle smile on her face. The evening sunlight basked her in it's warmth as the subtle scent of roses gently stroked the walls of her lungs, as she waited for <sup>the</sup> curator to-



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- call back and approve. Couple of minutes passed as she finally received a call.

The latter felt her heart palpitating inside her chest as she answered.

“Miss, I can't find the artwork that you have mentioned. There is, in fact an empty canvas and messy medium of art.”

The news struck her like a thunderbolt... at first she couldn't believe it. Panic rushed throughout her body which felt like cold spiders as she ~~vain~~ ran.

She opened the door with a thud just to find ~~+~~ an empty canvas as the curator had mentioned. Jennie felt

her legs getting weaker and weaker as she subconsciously fell on the floor as tears rolled down her soft cheeks.

“Why would it get stolen...” The damsel-





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- spoke with a desperate and trembling tone in her voice. Out of the blue, she felt a hand on her shoulders. "No way.." she spoke, astonished as her artwork stood in front of her. Alive and breathing!. Did aphrodite hear her prayers? Was she hallucinating? She was unsure. Her mind was a cathedral of chaos as of the moment. "Don't be scared.." the artwork finally spoke. Her voice felt as soft as satiny as her dress. It was indeed a breathtaking sight to witness. The 'painting' suddenly held her creator in a warm embrace. Jennie stood silent, and let her 'artwork' comfort her at the moment. "I'm just a result of your determination and love. But I want you to know that-





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- the purpose of your living & is to be who you are. The blazing fire of determination in your eyes should stay as the same throughout your life. Nothing could stop you, either time nor people. Bliss. yes bliss is the purpose of your life..." The 'artwork' concluded her words while simultaneously caressing her hair. & Jennie's eyes mind felt like it is miraculously metamorphosing to a better reality by each passing moment. The latter felt her eyes slowly opening as she could see the ceiling of her house. The coldness of the floor, on which she was lying on crawled on to her skin as it consumed. She wake up with a faint memory of what had happend.





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With a quick reflex she looked at the canvas that was not empty anymore. ~~She~~ "Am I dreaming...?" She was completely perplexed. Jennie sat still remembering each and every word from the ~~per~~ previous memory. As a gentle smile spread across her face, which never really left this time. Perhaps we all need to get out of our comfort zones to really open our minds again after being constrained by imposed mental confines. This life is indeed a universal phase and we're being thrown into a timely discovery of it, which renders so much comfort that we had - subconsciously yearned. Jennie felt herself slowly breaking free from this loop -





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- of pseudoliberations in a way that she would not come back willingly nor unwillingly. The answer she was looking for was in herself, deeply and strongly rooted like a weed in her own mind. In a way she had lost her mind to find her soul. Who she is, deep inside. After all freedom is internal. Unless we find freedom in ourselves, you cannot break free. Think to the two sides of coin. There is no internal without external, no peace without rage. It's like yin and yang. They are intertwined and interconnected within each other and thus the answer you are looking for is indeed in yourself.....

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