

UNTITLED 06

spring 2022

Cover photo by Sara Tohmeh  
& Wala Al-Sadi



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I Am Transnational

**PROSE**  
What does it mean to be Human?

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**OP-ED**  
Holism & Humanity

**SHORT STORY**  
From HOMESICKNESS to Wonderlust

**SHORT STORY**  
الدماء البيضاء

#### EDITORIAL TEAM

Salwa Abu Chaar  
Suad Al Aggad  
Huda Aljeshi  
Wala Al-Sadi  
Balkis Chaabane  
Omar Eladalousy  
Magy Kenderjian  
Celine Kraitem  
Maha Shaheen  
Sara Tohmeh

#### EDITOR IN CHIEF

Balkis Chaabane

#### ASSISTANT EDITOR IN CHIEF

Maha Shaheen

#### CONTACT

mepi@lau.edu.lb  
<http://mepitl.lau.edu.lb/>  
+ 961 1 786 456, ext. 2822

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*Cover photo by Wala Al-Sadi and Sara Tohmeh*

This publication was produced by students of the Tomorrow's Leaders Program at LAU. The program, a collaboration between the U.S. Department of State's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Lebanese American University (LAU), was launched in 2008. Coordinated by LAU's Student Development and Enrollment Management unit (SDEM), it provides higher education opportunities to youth from around the MENA region who demonstrate outstanding leadership potential but who may otherwise not have the chance to study in an American educational system.

The program's mission is to prepare future Arab leaders for the complexities of the 21st century. Through high-quality academic support, leadership development activities, and civic engagement opportunities, the program fosters professionalism, ethical conduct, and tolerance in order to enable students to become globally competitive leaders and agents of change in their respective societies.

# INTERCONNECTEDNESS

*Transnationality, Humanity, Connectivity, Acceptance, Tolerance, Diversity, Bridging Differences.*



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## PROSE

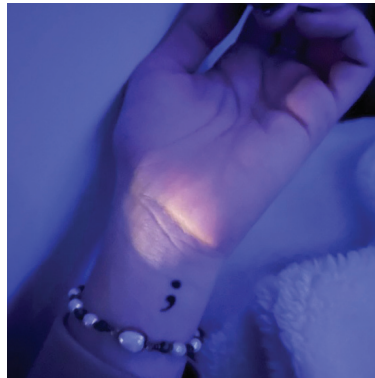
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STUDENT INITIATIVE

Produced by the students of the Middle East Partnership Initiative  
Tomorrow's Leaders Program at the Lebanese American University  
"Funding for the Tomorrow's Leaders program is provided by the U.S.- Middle East  
Partnership Initiative (MEPI), a grant from the United States Department of State."



# I Am Transnational

*written by Suad Al Aggad*



*Photo by Shane Rounce on Unsplash*



*I have always felt that I am part of a bigger world  
Being Syrian, Palestinian, and Jordanian.  
Borders to me are an imaginary concept, an idea  
Borders never fit into my definition of the world.*

*I look at us today, as we still struggle to understand each  
other, and I pause.  
How can we not understand that differences unite us?  
Why do we fight over what can be shared resources?  
How can we not see how interconnected we are?*

*All these are questions I ask every day, to everyone.  
Answers are many, yet none that convinces me.  
As a human race, we chose to let differences divide us.  
It is a sad yet truthful fact; that we overlook our collective  
potential for the sake of personal gain.*

*As such, I pray.  
I pray that we change.  
I pray that we unite.  
I pray that we come together.  
I pray that we connect.*

*For the beauty of one can only be seen while connected to  
others.*

# What does it mean to be Human?

*written by Balkis Chaabane*



*Photo by Aarón Blanco Tejedor on Unsplash*

*What does it mean, to be human?  
Are we all part of one  
Or are we one and part of all?*

*All humans are alike one way or another  
That, I know of  
All humans are also different  
That, I learn daily about*

*Biology connects us  
Senses connect us  
Instincts connect us  
Love connects us*

*Yet, we are separate  
We are different*

*We evolve  
We become  
We aspire*

*But whether you are from here or there  
Whether you speak my language or yours  
Whether you know me or not*

*We remain one race  
One in sharing a longing for life  
One in caring about our hearts  
One in striving to survive*

*We remain human  
All alike  
Yet very different.*

# Bypassing normal visual acuity

written by Sara Tohmeh



Photos by Jad Koweys & Aya Sammak



*look me in the eyes*

*look me in the*

*look me in*

*look me*

*look*

*look me*

*look me in*

*look me in the*

*look me in the soul*

*words drip from your lips soaked in sweetness*

*reflavoring all the bitterness in my life*

*aphasia*

*i fail to form words that depict you*

*i stutter*

*my words stumble*

*roll and fall*

*they land on paper*

*rib-caged*

*who said a bird cannot escape its cage?*

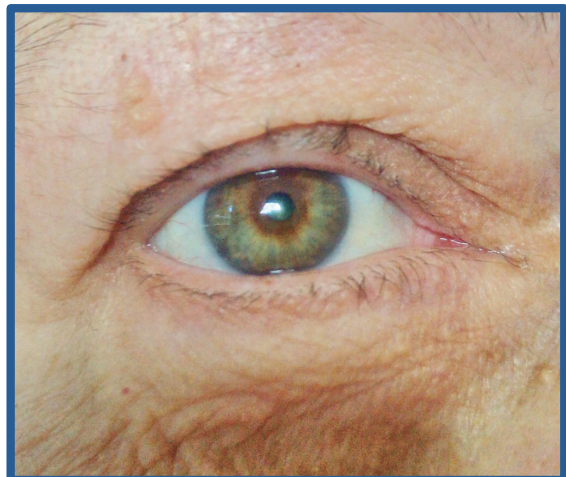
*if you did,*

*tell me how did my heart?*

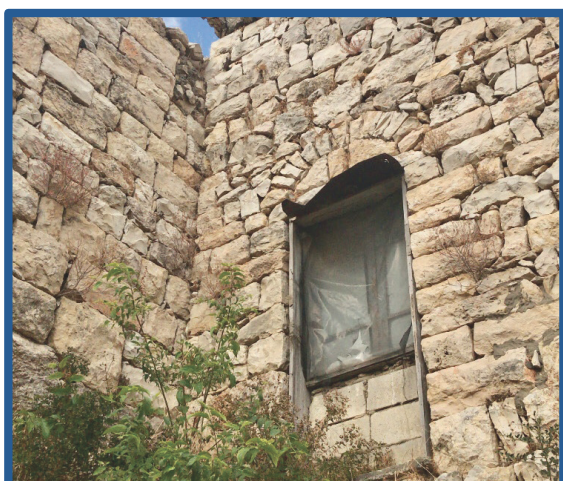
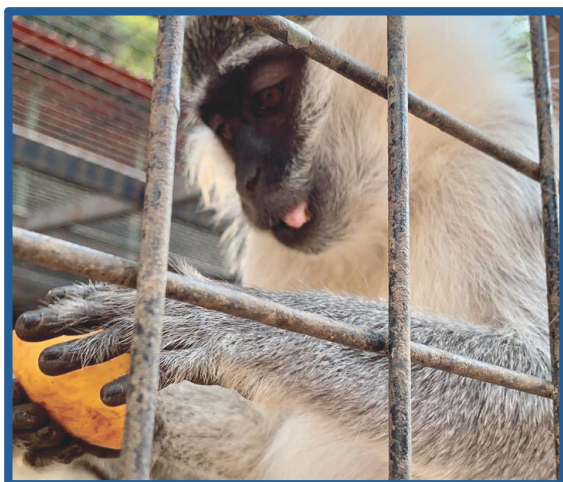


# Photo Essay

by Sarah Tohmeh







## 907

*written by Celine Kraitem*

I've thought of many ways to start this piece. I envisioned it from different angles, wondering if it would be better for me to start it by walking into the apartment with bags filled to the brink with food my mother forced me to take, only to freak out who would soon be my first friend at university. I thought maybe it would be good to start it with stargazing on the balcony with Salwa, or at least our attempts at stargazing with all the light pollution around us. It was very ironic to me: light pollution in a country constantly veiled in darkness. Dorms were different; I always talked about how I needed to get out, how I needed to find a better place to live in: a country far away enough for me to repress all the traumas surrounding the concept of home. Then came the dorms, where the lights turned on and off when you wished, where water was always hot and available. It felt like a different country, like an escape from a reality I've always tried to escape. The fact that I found joy in the simplest of my needs is sad, but in a way, it made the move to university more bearable. There were many ways I could start this piece, all of which started with me meeting a certain person. However, there was no way for me to start this piece, not in the way one normally would, because the semester did not start the way a semester normally would.

As I write this at 3:55 AM, listening to a song I don't recognize after crying over an unsaved word document while Hiba is giving Boutayna a head massage, I cannot help but think of how 4 months ago, I didn't know these people and how immensely grateful that I now do. I remember Boutayna once asked me to describe this semester in one word. I didn't answer her then. All that had happened in the span of

the short time we spent here played out in my mind, and I could not describe it. How could I? All the pain, trauma, anger, sadness, and emptiness... It was all-consuming. Yet, there was more to it. There was love, there was understanding, there was warmth. There was a beauty in how we grieved. A certain sense of humanity that bound us together in ways nobody expected.

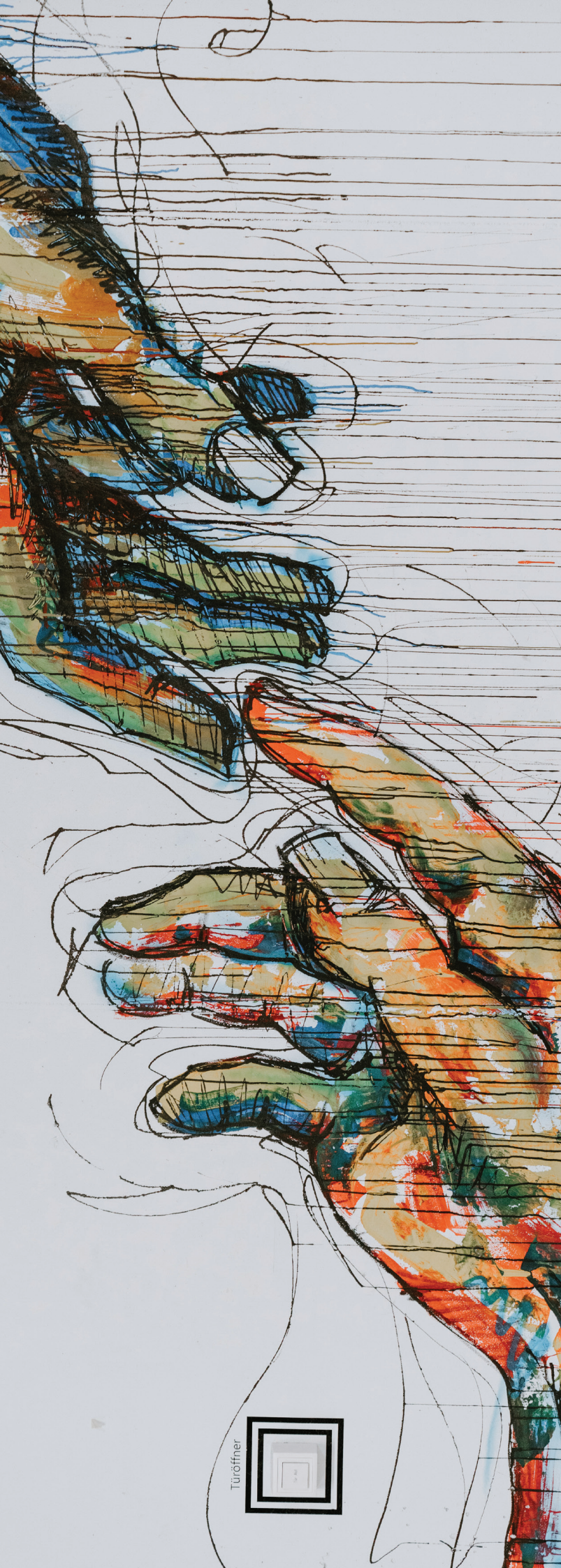
It was the balcony talks with Boutayna. The waiting for a taxi we forgot to order in front of Wooden Bakery at 4 AM. It was how Ghada fell into the sea late at night at Pierre and Friends and dragged Yasmine into the water with her. It was singing along to random songs at Booze and Brains, rushing to LAU Beirut for MUN at 6 AM when we only slept at 5, and Jana calling me her therapist. It was Hiba announcing how she wants to pee every time she comes into the room. It was talking about how unfair life is with Dani on her balcony and laughing about how it's messed up that the underprivileged are now privileged in one of the most bourgeoisie institutions in the country. It was pulling an all-nighter with her to study for our gender midterm and then acing it. It was Ghada and I looking for a computer science student to bribe to do our Computers Applications assignment, then ending up doing it ourselves. I was randomly finding myself posted on Hiba's Instagram stories. It was Sasha and Boutayna fighting like a married couple whenever I am in the apartment, and Sasha being grumpy all the time. It was screaming the lyrics to Creep by Radiohead with Boutayna at 3 AM and annoying Anas. It was Hiba baking a lemon cake with oranges at 3 AM while Ghada and I were panicking about our midterms. It was singing along





to Hozier in Sasha's car. It was all that and much more. In those moments of unadulterated joy, we grieved. What we went through would bring grownups to their knees, yet here we are. As broken, as happy, and as beautifully human as possible.

There were many ways I could end this piece but a part of me dreads it. Truth is, there is no way for me to end this piece; not in the way, I would have wanted to. This semester has been a hauntingly beautiful run-on sentence and a part of me is terrified of the finality that comes with a full-stop but I know that it must happen so: There is one way for me to end this piece and that is to say despite the influx of emotions coursing through me, gratefulness stands out; gratefulness for apartment 907 for connecting us in ways we didn't think possible.



Türöffner



Photo by Claudio Schwarz on Unsplash



**written by Magy Kendirjian**

We look at ourselves in the mirror, and we think we are different than everyone else in this world. It is the 21st century, we are at the peak of globalization and interdependency, yet we still believe that we are very far away from each other, that we are different than other people.

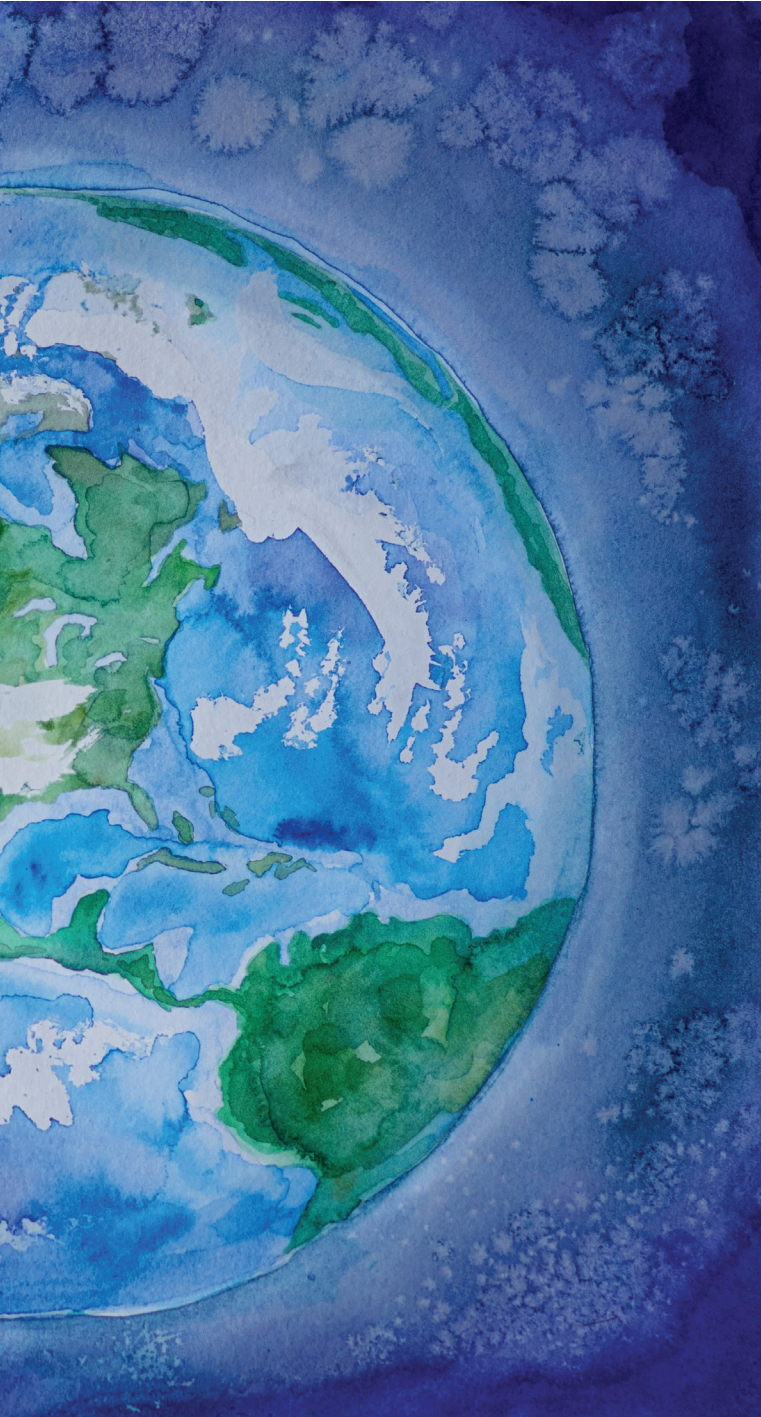
However, when we look deeply into it, people are not actually different. We are still all humans. We may differ in the way we talk, the way we live, the way we dress, we may even have very diverse interests, but, behind all those lifestyles and social differences, we all belong to this world. And because we are social beings, we cannot grow separately, we must always work together, closely, so that we could evolve. But how are we actually similar as a race? In all that we are as people and individuals, we differ from others in every aspect. So, with all the differences that we have, how similar can we be?

Well, as our laws of nature insist, we are indeed after all one race. In other words, we are known to be similar creatures on this earth. As such, we are inclined to help each other to survive. a similar form of creature, and when it comes to the world of nature, every species gets together to help itself. Hence, because we live in this world together, we are bound to fight together for our survival as a race.



*Photo by Elena Mozhvilo on Unsplash*





When it comes to realists in a political context, they say people are greedy and selfish. Realists believe that people only fight for their survival. So, for the survival of their person, they put themselves and their interests before everything else. In my opinion, it is life's harsh experiences that bring people to this greedy state of mind. And when it comes to the extremes, where the human race is affected, I think people would start to work together. For example, global warming was at first just a theory that only a group of people believed in. But today, when we all saw the impact it started to have on our planet, the reality of it in front of us, there is a larger group that came together to work towards solving it because it is for the survival of our race. Global warming is getting more serious by the day, and the more people realize the issue at hand is treacherous, the more they are working together to try and find a solution.

After all, every little thing we do affects not just ourselves as individuals and, not only our societies but also our entire world. Our world is home to millions of creatures, which is why, every single step we take, and every decision we make, makes all the difference in the world. The most important point, however, is that nobody can make a change alone, it is impossible. All individuals and experts must come together, one must help the other with the knowledge he/she possesses to make a better change.



# Humans of TL

Photo Series









Photo by Huda Aljeshi



# Tangerines

*written by Huda Aljeshi*

In my village,  
We look after each other.  
We peel tangerines and share the slices.

I look for my village's embrace in every town I visit.

I found it everywhere I didn't look.  
It found me outside a Tropical Smoothie,  
Dazed, confused, and starving for connection.

It took me in, warmed me up,  
and gave me a seat at the table  
before I even realized I was hungry.

(Matching ink marks both our bodies.  
Matching ink bonds us together.)

Tonight my cup overflows with love.  
I'll peel all the tangerines in the world,  
If it means I get to share them with you.

Our time together was limited,  
Hours stolen between teardrops and heavy rain,  
Our memories even started slipping from my fingers.

In a few days, I will leave you behind,  
Board a plane to the unknown,  
But the scent of tangerines still lingers.

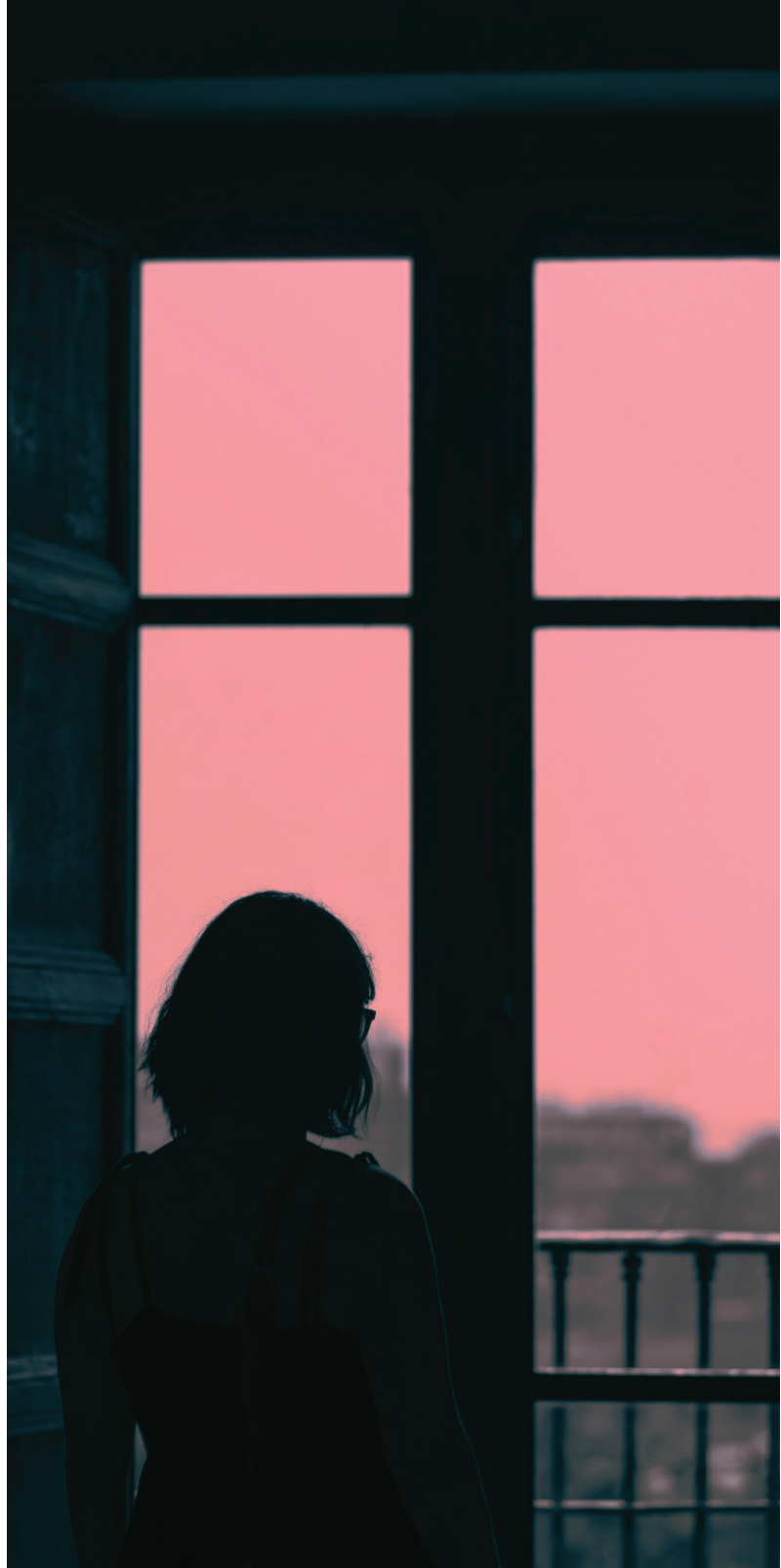
# The Woman Across

*written by Salwa Abu Chaar*

It was a barren cold Sunday in early December, and Jeanette opened her eyes softly to the faint traces of sunlight shining down on her face. Rolling out of her warm cocoon, she was met with the misty air of autumn mornings. She stretched away a long night of sleep and stood inspecting her messy reflection in the mirror. The clock on the wall above her read 7:45 am. Sighing, she took off into the bathroom and began her daily routine.

While all her colleagues couldn't wait for the weekend, Jeanette despised it. She liked the noise of weekdays, the clamor of crowds soaring, the hundreds of quiet whispers that mount up into one, loud echo. She felt relieved with the rise of each Monday knowing that she won't have to endure any longer the merciless voice that keeps ringing in her ear. The noise, though loud, was enough to drown out her ever-spinning thoughts. Whenever someone spoke to Jeanette, her mind would stop reeling, it would take a break from the torturous pace at which it thinks.

Jeanette reached for her red lipstick, dabbing it ever-so-lightly on her



*Photo by Jr Korpa on Unsplash*



lips. Her cheeks looked too pale for someone her age. She added more red there too. She reached for her phone for the first time in hours. Christmas is just around the corner! Benefit from 50% off your first- She flipped it back on the counter and sighed. Giving herself one final look in the mirror, she made her way to the closet and picked her favorite black turtleneck dress.

She could hear the faint sound of a car engine starting in the street outside her apartment. Don't go, she thought, The city's already too empty. But no one can hear her pleading in her head, and so the car took off into the horizon, leaving behind a lonely street and a haunting silence Jeanette knew all too well.

She then trod to the kitchen to prepare her usual cup of coffee, and if she had left her phone sitting on the counter of her bathroom, she didn't notice. She glanced again at the clock, it was 8:15 am now. Time seems to pass by torturously slow when you don't spend it with others, she thought as she brewed her coffee. Jeanette, though she refuses to admit it out loud, has grown into a self-isolating machine. She has spent too much of her days engrossed in her worries, giving too much power to the detrimental voice in her head, that she failed to notice how her life was passing her by. This is how she has fostered a sense of hatred at the world, at her colleagues, at people her age that spend their Saturday nights partying and their Sunday mornings at the beach, and deep down, at her own solitude. She believed that no one saw her loneliness, because they were too busy living their own lives.

The hot cup stung her freezing hands in jolts of delicious pain, bringing her back into her apartment. Her high heels clicked as she approached the window of her living room, bringing a chair closer. She finally sat down, took a sip from her cup, and looked out into the vastness of her city.

And at that moment, Jeanette caught sight of someone in the building right across her. It was a woman that looked of the same age as Jeanette, wearing the same black turtleneck dress, her red lips blowing on the cup in her hands. Jeanette stared incredulously at the same time the woman across locked eyes with her. At that moment in time, the two women, each in a separate building, looked less like two distant persons, and more like the reflection of one's self in the mirror.

"What a strange coincidence", thought Jeanette, as she resumed her drinking, both women unable to help themselves from stealing glances every other second.

How many times have our battleships and our triumphs, our muffled cries in midnight silence, and our sacred prayers in moments of desperation been shared with people we have never met? When we had faith it was only us living this excruciating reality, how many times have we looked at a stranger and recognized a familiar face?

What Jeanette was oblivious to was that she wasn't the only one who dressed up on that cold Sunday morning, even though they had no place to go to.

# Holism & Humanity

*written by Omar Eladarousy*

Let me start by telling you the greatest story of all time. Let me tell you the story of creation. When the universe cooled, and atoms started to form, it was all hydrogen with just a fraction of helium. The energy and temperature of that cosmic explosion were astronomically high and they didn't allow heavier atoms to form. You ask, "how did we end up on a planet made of silicon, iron, oxygen, and tens of other elements that make up life around us?"

When a star dies, it explodes in a huge event that lights up the entire galaxy. During this explosion, hydrogen and helium form all the heavier atoms from lithium to uranium. The explosive power of the supernova scatters all these elements all over the galaxy. The famous American astronomer Carl Sagan once said, "The nitrogen in our DNA, the calcium in our teeth, the iron in our blood were made in the interiors of collapsing stars. We are made of stardust." In that sense, everything in the universe is one in origin. Everything is connected.

Life on the Earth is one in origin. The DNA of all living creatures has the basic recipe for life. From the bacteria that roamed the sea 2 billion years ago to humans, every creature is directly related to the first cells formed on Earth. In that sense, every organism is one in origin.

99.9% of Humans' DNA is common to all of us. Scientifically, all human beings share the same ancestor. Y-Chromosomal Adam is the patrilineal most recent common ancestor of all currently living humans. Mitochondrial Eve is the matrilineal most recent common ancestor of all living humans.



*Photo by Tim Marshall on Unsplash*





Whether it's the saying of science or religion, we are all the direct ancestors of only two humans that lived around 200-150 thousand years ago. And in that sense, every human is one in origin.

These are not the only ways we are all connected. I believe we all have more extensive and immense connections than being one in origin at every step in our creation, and that connection comes from holism.

Any collective is greater than the sum of its elements; this is the principle of holism. We are stronger together than the sum of our strengths. Any group work is greater than the sum of all the contributions of its members. In my opinion, that's why every civilization on earth is more preeminent than all the people who built it. What is so unique about us is that once we are unified, we can create and develop things that are much greater than their individual parts.

After reading about the history of the world, I feel we need a different type of unity now more than at any other time since the dawn of civilization. This time we need unity under one flag. In the era of individuality, we need to unite under a common goal. We need unity for humanity. When I think about it, humanity is much greater than the sum of individual humans.

As a final message, end all affiliations and identities' fanaticism. Before you identify or affiliate with any extreme ideology, remember to affiliate with humanity and identify as a human. You're a human before anything else.

# From HOMESICKNESS to Wanderlust

written by Wala Al-Sadi



Photo by Taha Rahman – Yemen



Photo by Elie Obeid - Lebanon



Photo by Hassan Dallah - Syria

Looking around, wondering at nothing or at everything, I was recalling all the memories of my life till this very moment, sitting in a chair at the library of my university in another country writing about the country I come from, Yemen, and the one I currently live in, Lebanon.

During my new journey in Lebanon, which will become six months when these lines are read, I have been trying to ignore the fact that I came from a country that is facing “the Worst Humanitarian Crises” as are the titles of most articles I read that talk about my country, my home, and the place I belong to. Whenever I say I am from Yemen, I face these questions: How is the situation in Yemen? Is there a war in Yemen? Does your family live far from the war? and many other questions. But I find myself explaining everything in detail and not being shy about the situation that my country is facing, but working hard to make a huge number of people understand what we are going through and that is what we need the MENA region and the world to be aware of and to learn from. Followed by that, I start talking about how Yemeni youth are trying their best to change the situation and how Yemen is actually a beautiful country rich in history, heritage, and with many wonderful places to visit!

Not forgetting to mention how moving to Lebanon changed the way I look into my home country but also to countries such as Algeria, Syria, Tunisia, Jordan, Iraq, Morocco, and Lebanon as I became familiar with the people, culture, food, arts, music, or even their geopolitical situation. At that moment, it is where I found



myself surrounded by many cultures. I was also feeling homesick and here was when a new journey of self-exploration started. Regarding my experience, I had some conversations with students from MENA about culture, heritage, while trying to learn their dialect and I found these similarities that made me discover how curious I am to know more and go deeper into such cultures and plan to visit these countries. As Arabs, we have a lot in common. It made me feel like we are all one country. Once, my Algerian Flatmate showed me a picture of their traditional costume. "Oh, we have something similar in Yemen!" I said, and this is just a part of many conversations that were full of similarities and differences. Who knows that we have many common dishes where only names are different! All of this and more made this place feel like Home! Going deeper into Art and Music, writing over and over, looking around, enjoying the view, and remembering that wherever and whenever I look at the sunset, I feel like I am in that place, HOME that I feel so connected to. It is never easy to understand how these changes can affect us, and the lives of the people around us. It is a dream to be that far from your country, but you found people who are also away from their countries and you understand each other like a family!

Back to reality to the library of the university, looking around one more time, it is never too late to understand how you feel about moving to a new place and to find the people that will share with you the journey.



*Photo by Ali El Madani - Morocco*



*Photo by Ahmed Zarroki - Tunisia*



*Photo by dz\_travelcouple - Algeria*



*Photo by Mohammed Hedi Jaza - Tunisia*



*Photo by Fatima Zahra Mabrouk - Morocco*



*Photo by Mohammed Hedi Jaza - Tunisia*





*Photo by Hala Al-Sadi – Yemen*



Photo by Melissa El Feghali - Lebanon



*Photo from a Moroccan wedding*

يتخلى طرف عن سلاحه ويتمسك به الطرف الآخر فتحقيق بأحدهما هزيمة منكرة، وافقت جميع الدول راغبة أو راغمة لإنهاء المعاناة وأجبرت شعوبها على الانصياع للإجراءات الوفاقية من العنف بما فيها تناول العقار الذي يتحكم في الغضب ويقضي على كل ما له علاقة بالعنف والتخريب، عمار غريب ينزع العنف لكنه بالخطأ ينزع معه جزء من إنسانيتنا فأصبح ما يسري بداخلهم دماء بيضاء الأثر خالية من الفوران والغليان والعنفوان. كانت التجارب السريرية الأولى مبشرة واعدة ، لكن ما تلاها كان خارج الحساب، إذ ظهرت



Photo by Starline from Freepik

آثار جانبية بعيد المدى، فالأفراد الذين تناولوا العقار فقدوا تدريجياً تواصلهم مع الواقع ومع أنفسهم، لكن الغريب أن هذه الأعراض لم تظهر ولم تؤثر على الأطفال، والسبب أيضاً مجهول ربما لأن فطرة الأطفال لم تتلوث بعد وليس لديهم الحقد والحقد الدائم الموجود لدى البالغين.

تذكر اللحظة التي توجه فيها إلى المركز المنوط بإعطاء هذا العقار، شعر بمخالب ينغرس في ذراعه الأيسر وإذا بضوء ساطع أعمى عينيه لثوان وصوت يخبره بأنه هذا القرار الحكيم لا رجعة فيه وأنه بمجرد تلقيه الحقنة سيتخلص نهائياً من كل مشاعر الغضب وسيكون أكثر سلاماً واندماجاً في المجتمع، تجمد برهة وابتسم في بلاهة زادت من غرابة الموقف الذي هو فيه الآن. علي أي حال يبدو أن التجربة فشلت فشلاً ذريعاً. غريب ما يفعله البشر بعضهم البعض بإسم السلام.

لماذا كل هذه الحروب .. ألا نستطيع ان نتفق بدون عقاقر؟ بدون أن نمحي ذاكرة الآخر .. فقط أن نستمع ونقبل بعضنا البعض .. هذا الكوكب مليء بالمعاناة .. يوجد طعام يكفينا جميعاً، و ماء يروي عطشنا كلنا.. إذا فما الداعي لكل هذه الحروب.. ألا نستطيع أن نسمو فوق آلامنا وأحقادنا ونسيطر على طموحنا الجامح في السيطرة على الآخرين وتسخيرهم .. فوضى الكلام وفوضى المشاعر، ضوضاء الحياة على كوكب عمره بلايين السنين في مجرة واسعة هل نستطيع إجراء حوار مع نفسك لا أسالك ان نتحدث مع الآخر ولكن الأوصال مع نفسك ثم فكر ما سيضيفه لك إيذاء الآخرين، فأنت تسرق منهم حاضرمهم ومستقبلهم. رغم أنك تعلم جيداً أننا متشابهون ولو أعنت النظر لوجدت ان تحت هذا الجلد -أيما كان لونه- يقبع جسد على ضعفه قوي وعلى هشاشته عظامه قادر على التصدي للكثير، لكن خلقنا الله ينقصنا شيء لحكمة، هي أن نحتاج الآخرين لنكون أسعد وأقوي وأمن، بين الجلد والروح جميعنا بشر، ينقصنا فقط التواصل، الكلمة واللمسة والنظرة الحانية من انسان لآخر لتخبره بأنه ليس وحده في طريقه يمكن أن تكون لحظات فارقة في التاريخ الانساني.

عندما فتح عينيه لم يجد أي من هؤلاء الاشخاص حوله، كل ما رأى كان مجرد حلم عابر من بقايا ذكرياته فأغلق عينيه، وحاول الاستماع إلى الصوت الحر الخافت بداخله، هل تمنيت العودة بالزمن للحظة ما مرت وأردت تصحيحها؟ كل القرارات الخاطئة و اللحظات الفارقة وأنت لا تدري هل الاحتمال كان ليأخذك لأبعد مما تتمنى .. تصاعد الموسيقى بداخلك وتراقص الأمل في عينيك كلما فكرت بأنه كان من الممكن التراجع عن هذا القرار وكيف للحياة أن تكون أجمل بدونه.. و انطفاء البريق في عينيك عندما تتذكر إستحالة الرجوع بالزمن، دموعك المتلاحقة رثاءاً لكل اللحظات التي سبرت روحك وانغرس في قلبك، كل لحظات الحنين العابرة، من أجل كل الكلمات التي صيغت ولم تقال أو قيلت ولم تُقصد. الحياة برهة بين الأمل والخوف، فسحة بين الامل والرجاء .. هذه المعزوفة التي نسجها الخيال تحت وطأ رصاص الحروب أو شظايا الكلمات .. البشر يعانون بما فيه الكفاية، يكفي كون أحدهم وغداً وحيداً يتغذى على أنين الجوعى واليتامى ليجعل حياتهم على هذا الكوكب أسوأ، يكفي أيضاً ألا تكون أنت هذا الوغد الوحيد. ربما علينا فقط العودة إلى الجذور والتأمل في فطرتنا السليمة كما الأطفال.



# الدماء البيضاء

بقلم مها شاهين



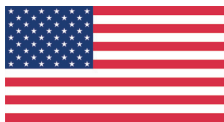
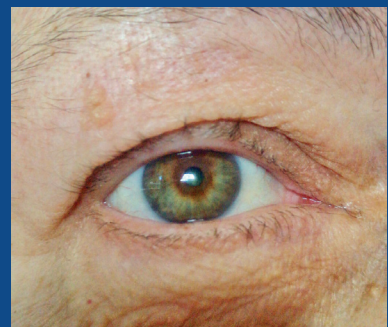
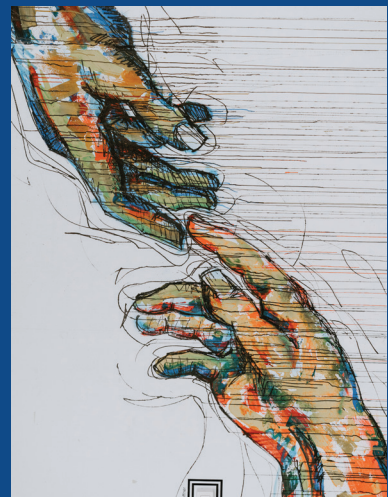
صوت أزيز ودخان يتصاعد وسط الضباب حيث يقف مترنحاً غير آبه بالأصوات المتسارعة حوله، يري الأشخاص على مقربة منه شاحبي البشرة شاخصي الأبصار تكاد أعينهم تتساقط من شدة التعب كأوراق الخريف المنهكة، لا يجمعهم شيء سوى فقدانهم التواصل مع حواسهم ومع من حولهم وما يزال السبب مجهول، شعر بمرارة في حلقه وبطعم معدني يخترق صدره وصولاً إلى وجدانه. ببقايا قواه الخائرة رفع يديه ليستصوت صوت الطنين المتصاعد في أذنيه، ومالبث أن سمع أصوات عنيفة تعوي في المكان، بحث حثيثاً عن مصدرها لكن باثت كل محاولاته بالفشل فما كان منه إلا أن استكان فأحس بالأصوات تسري منه هو إلى الخارج، لم يستطع مقاومة الألم

وتحجرت الدموع في مقلتيه ونفذت منه الكلمات .. سيطرت على المكان بمن فيه حالة من الشلل التام.

بدأ في استعادة وعيه وبيطء حاول السيطرة على جسده تدريجياً، ومع ذلك لا يتذكر كيف وصل هناك، كأنما يفيق من حالة خدر بالغة حيث يستيقظ عقله جزء تلو الآخر .. تتحرك عيناه فاحصة كل ما حوله وتسيطر عليه حالة من الرعب والرغبة ليس هو فقط لكنها تحتاج كل الوجوه .. جميعها واجمة مرتعدة .. وقف بنصف عقل وبقايا ذاكرة مهترئة ورعشة في الأوصال .. ومنذ اللحظة الأولى والاسئلة تتصاعد في ذهنه ما هي المخلوقات الواجمة حوله؟ من هو؟ واين نحن؟ وكيف جئنا هنا؟ ولماذا آل بنا المطاف لهذه البقعة المظلمة؟ بل والأهم ما سر تجمعهم في نفس المكان؟.. شعر ببعض الانتماء لهم فهم يشبهون بعضهم ويشبهون ما يري من نفسه، وكالعادة عندما نضيع نميل للبقاء بجوار ما يشبهنا ولن نعرف ما يشبهك الا إذا خرجت عيناك عن المألوف او فقدت معرفتك بالمألوف من الأساس، كما هو الحال ها هنا. الشيء المشترك بينهم هو ذلك الخواء في ذاكرتهم كأنما تعرضوا جميعاً لصدمة هائلة أو تم حقنهم بمادة حذفت أجزاء من وعيهم وشوهدت تفكيرهم مسوخ بعقل ناقص وجسد انساني سليم.

لحظات و إذا بشيء صغير يخرج من وسط الدخان يشبه تلك الكائنات المحيطة به لكنه أصغر حجماً يبدو بريء مسالم وقريب للقلب وفي نفس الوقت غير مبالي، الجهل بالمخاطر يعطي أحياناً جرأة وإقدام .. هذا الشيء يستطيع التحرك بسلاسة وينساب بينهم بسلاسة، يقترب ولكنه تحرك صوب أحد تلك الكائنات والتصق بها واذا به يمد يديه ليتحسس وجهها ، أذايت لمسة الطفل البريئة الوجود من علي وجه ما اتضح فيما بعد انها أمه، تلك اللمسة أضاءت عيناها وردت إليها جزء لا بأس به من الحياة، عقلها لا يتذكره لكن قلبها يعرفه جيداً، وبدون مقدمات قطع الصمت بكلمة كان لحنها أكثر صخباً في عقولهم، إذ نادى على أمه وكانت لهذه الكلمة أثر سحري على أذانهم، فلقد نبهت ذاكرتهم إل عهد سابق حيث كانت لديهم المقدرة علي إصدار مثل تلك الأصوات والتواصل بها، لكن لم يفطنوا لتأليه ذلك في الوقت الراهن.

مرت ومضات سريعة في مخيلته، تذكر أناس يعانون وحرائق و انفجارات ووجوه مألوفة يحصدها الموت، لحظات من حياته السابقة كانت في أحد أشنع العصور الانسانية، لطالما كانت بشعة لكن ما إنكشف من قبها وكما الانتهاكات كان أقطع من الخيال، ليس بسبب وباء حصد الالاف من الأرواح أو انتشار المجاعات والحروب والعنف أو التلوث الذي خنق الكوكب عن آخره كل هذا ليس بجديد، ولكن تلك التجربة اللعينة ألقت بظلالها على البشر جميعاً، فبعد إنتشار العنف والحرب الطاحنة التي أهلكت الكوكب فطن العلماء إلى حل سيخلص الجميع من المعاناة، وكان الشرط الوحيد لنجاحه هو اشتراك الجميع فيه،لانه ليس من المنطقي أن نكون في حالة حرب و



**STUDENT INITIATIVE**

**BEIRUT CAMPUS**  
P.O. Box 13-5053 Chouran  
Beirut 1102 2801, Lebanon  
Tel: +961 1 786 456  
+961 3 791 314  
Fax: +961 1 867 098

**BYBLOS CAMPUS**  
P.O. Box 36  
Byblos, Lebanon  
Tel: +961 9 547 257  
+961 3 791 314  
Fax: +961 9 944 851

**NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS  
& ACADEMIC CENTER**  
211 East, 46th Street  
New York, NY 10017, USA  
Tel: +1 212 203 4333  
Fax: +1 212 784 6597