

Part 1

Elijah walked around the city. The lofty skyscraper engulfed me in belittled timidity, as he is exposed to a growing metropolis of discovery. The fluorescent sun is a forgotten part in this urban plain. The ear-piercing clamorous pandemonia of car honks, the chatter of ordinary pedestrians and the slam of a door all fuse together to create an elixir for vacation which hassles me in agony. The thick blanket of miasma engulfs us in choking agitation as aromas of diesel waft in the man-made scene. The canvas is painted to form a gradient of amethyst, red jasper, sodalite and tiger's eye which draws 'awes' and 'aahs' from society. The city is like a growing marketplace, yet hidden beneath it, is a lurking abyss of alienation and isolation. This is where Elijah lives: in a luxury apartment, but he is surrounded by fiendish lies and traps of society.

Every morning, Elijah wakes up to velvet curtains being pulled by his household robot, Alexa. His servant has made porridge with Scottish oats, 946 bananas from Kushiro in Japan and Bring's red currant jam. He is served with french toast topped with maple syrup and earthly strawberries. He is given handmade poached eggs from Leghorns and bacon from Iberico pork. Finally, Elijah is to drink freshly-squeezed orange juice served in a crystal cup. He then asks Alexa to tell him the news. After that, he is given a massage which he has to pay thousands for. After that, Elijah is served a meal of luxury Japanese Kobe beef, mixed with hopshoots and a hearty Caesar salad. Then, Elijah watches some movies until it is dinner. He has a simpler dinner, although it is still like diamonds to the average society. Finally, he exits his luxurious apartment and arrives at the Botanical Gardens in a Rolls-Royce. He takes a stroll for his exercise in a diamond-topped Armani suit with onyx Burberry shoes encrusted with jewels. However, he is depressed and cannot find the gold nuggets of happiness incrusting into his life. Elijah lives in isolation and weeps almost every night. He wants to find joy. But, he can't. This keeps going on and on for Elijah until, one day, he approaches a kind old lady on his stroll in the Botanical Gardens.

"Why, gentleman", says the old lady with a fake smile, "What a lovely shirt you have". Elijah stares down at his linen shirt and tries to smile. "Thank you". But, a disapproving look is hidden in her face. Elijah stops and stares at the old lady. "Why, if I were you, I would rather be happy than to be rich". And this is the moment that Elijah realises his problem. He invests his life in riches and goods but will never find true happiness. The old lady walks away and leaves Elijah alone.

"Should I be rich or to be happy?" asks Elijah as he walks in his room. Pictures of a red-brick home with old-fashioned lights appear to him as he envisions the life of living in a humid and arid room with thin blankets in winter. He imagines eating plain noodles for lunch with a bit of meat and veggies. How could he abandon his Rolls-Royce? How could he abandon his private yacht? But, Elijah wants to live in happiness too. After all, that is the plan of rich people. To be happy.

Note:

Very good, Caleb. You did it again. You have used descriptive language in describing the city. The themes of alienation, danger, and self-discovery is also reflected. The four questions about learning and realisation are also shown by the main character. Furthermore, there are no errors in your work. Mark: 50/50

But, how could one be happy and live in poverty? Elijah was too rich to understand. That night, he slept in depression. He couldn't bear the pain. And that leads to the question - If I'm already living in pain, why shouldn't I take another path? And, so, Elijah donated most of his money to charities, found a new home and sold his luxury products to donate. A feeling of a fresh start engulfed him in blissful happiness. He found true happiness. Elijah lived a humble life and would never feel a sense of regret.

Part 2

The flickering of molten carnelian and yellow jasper mull me in reassuring satisfaction as I am swaddled into a cashmere blanket of relaxing bliss. The wind's mouth opens and emits a wrathful 'howl' and we are huddled together as we approach the campfire. The saccharine aroma of marshmallows emit radiating cloyingness and we laugh as we spread stories around the fire. I bite into the crispy and velvet marshmallow and the heat burns my tongue in joyful cheeriness. Sparks from burnt metal erupt which are rewarded with 'awes' and 'aahs' which erupt from the silence. We spend our time telling stories of our grandparent's lives when they were children. Finally, we played a game of marbles and I said the classic phrase - "Don't let the bed bugs bite". It fades into the darkness and the cackle of the fire ceases, the giggles halt, the wind's angry howl curbs and the chats reminiscing our childhood pulls the plug on. Silence. And, then, we're all asleep.

I wake up to witness a masterpiece of well-blended terra-cotta, apricot, light orange spice, and dark lavender which all brings our family together. However, it feels as if someone is missing. I don't really care though, because we're all having too much fun. I call my children for breakfast and they are served fried eggs, french toast, and a hearty portion of avocado. It's until I call Joe's name and only silence responds. I call again and the wind's whistle reprimands her to be quiet. Again, I call and the rustle of the leaves answer. Suddenly, our laughs are silenced. We realise that Joe is gone. Our brother is gone. Mother is wearing a bracelet of stress on her arm. Even the youngest child, Alex, can understand what's happening. "What are we going to do?", asks Alex in depressing melancholy. Only tears reply. I'm the one under the most pressure here. I know that my husband cannot go with her. He just had his legs broken. He has to look after the children. But, I'm not so sure if she can go into the woods by herself. I need a companion. Should I risk her own life to save one of her beloved children?

"Can you all go in the tent please children?", mother asks. The children all go in obediently. Father looks at me and he goes into the tent. Then, I weep onto the dry, arid ground. A waterfall of gushing melancholy flows out of my eyes. I don't want to go into the forest by myself. It's too dangerous. But, I don't want to see my son crying and calling to silence for help. But, why does it have to be me? I'm livid and enraged. But, he's my son. I have to save him. But, what if I die? What if I die for nothing? What if I'm pulled into an abyss and am stuck just like Joe? I don't know what to do. My sobs are answered with shudders from the children. I realise that the only

way to save Joe is to sacrifice my life. I ask my husband to come out and I tell him that I'm going. He nods but I can tell he doesn't agree. But, it's the only way.

The aromas of earth and scented flowers fuse together to create an elixir for anxiety. I'm in an abyss of unknown tunnels. Every path winding its way to a lost city. I have a rope which curls on the path I'm taking, so I don't get lost. I'm trying to find the golden nugget of hope hidden in my life. There are no signs of Joe. There is no sign of his wet tears, no sign of his heavy hiking boots, no sign of his odour of stenching sweat. I continue to hike when - footsteps! And those look like his small Merrel shoes. I follow the footsteps. I follow until I find an abyss. And right in there is Joe.

"Joe!", I shout. His tears stop. He looks up. He recognises me and is delighted. "Mum!", he shouts with a trace of joy and happiness. The hole isn't too deep. Our rope is long enough. And I still remember the track. I throw the rope in and Joe climbs up. "Thank you mother", Joe says. I smile at him. "Let's get back to the campsite before you get lost again", I say with a smile on my face. Joe hugs me and before sunset, he is reunited with his beloved family again.

Part 3 *Note: This is a good scene. You were able to tell me this memorable event using dialogues quite adequately. Moreover, the story's atmosphere and setting is also painted in my psyche vividly. Good work for this!*

Mark: 50/50

~~I watch Louis Armstrong play melodies of enthralling happiness as he sings a tune which is a fragrant flower, velvety and soft. The gating tunes of 'What a Wonderful World' truly touched my heart, as his voice engulfs me in raptured bliss. The last words are like a warm blanket which covers me in touched felicity. Finally, the neon stage lights flash, Louis Armstrong walks out, the liquid nitrogen machine starts and cheers and applause explode into the stage like a volcano. We're mesmerised by his charisma and talent, and later in the night I tell mom that I want to be just like Louis Armstrong. The man who touched my heart.~~

Your timeline does not seem sound. The legendary New Orleans singer and trumpeter Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong had been making records since 1923, but in 1967 he released "What A Wonderful World," which would become the biggest-selling song of his long and storied career. Get your dates straight. This song is not from the 1920s.

I walk into our red-bricked home with pallid columns on the side. I try to look into the frosted glass and I can only see the shadows of mum and little Joe talking. I open the antique wooden door. Inside, chandeliers hang from the ceiling and a leather couch is on the opposite side. Velvety carpets with patterns engraved on them lie on the varnished wooden floor. A rocking horse that my father made for Joe is sitting in the entrance room. Mum looks at me. She wears a smile of blissful rapture. "How was it?", she asks with a euphoric jocundity. I smile back and simply say, "Great". Mum then turns away and continues to feed him dinner as I continue my studies to become a doctor. When the calm music of 'lullaby' drifts into an abyss of sleeping tranquillity, mum comes into my room. Mother reads me a bedtime story and just before she goes I say to her, "Can I be a jazz singer like Louis Armstrong, Mum?". Mum chuckles a bit. "Well, I don't know but you certainly could", says mum. But, I realise a dark truth. "Would I have to give up my dream of becoming a doctor?" I ask mum, as I bite my nails. Mum sighs. "I'm afraid you would have to", she sighs, "But don't be afraid, you don't need to choose which path that early". And the 'flick' of the switch threatens to close my eyes and sleep.

But I can't sleep. The perpetual whirlpool of options drowns me in unknown danger. Should I give up my childhood dream to be like Louis Armstrong? Or should I keep my dream as a nurse? Mother said to always chase the dreams you want. I want to be a jazz singer. I weep silently as mother and father are sleeping. Tears of perpetual agony gush down my face like a waterfall. Which one should I choose? I pinch myself. I want to inspire young people as they hear my voice. But, I also want to be a lifesaver, and help someone on the edge of life. Which one should I choose? I dream of holding a microphone encrusted with diamonds and telling my dream and path to the crowd. And, I also dream of holding thousands of meticulous tools and saving one's life. But, I want to become a Jazz singer. So I have to betray my dream as a nurse. I have to.

This morning, everything is bright. The sunset is a canvas beautifully blended. I have a new hope. I have a hope of no more painful studies to become a doctor. I have hope to bring joy, not just physical help to people. I have hope to become a Jazz singer.

I'm in a renowned concert place. Liquid nitrogen fades into darkness and a blinding spotlight is on me. This is my debut. I want to appeal to the crowds. I'm 20 now and this is my first song. My voice travels through the distance like an actress on a catwalk. I sing words that make me cry, yet I laugh. I regretted none of my decisions. Because, here I am, a star Jazz singer on debut in the 20s.

See your female lead character debuted in 20s yet her song inspiration was released 40 years after.

Note:

This is an okay narrative, Caleb You have written it quite creatively. However, you were not able to reach the 10 required metaphors here. Please comply to this mark next time. On the other hand, I am perplexed by the setting and timeline of your story, Caleb. Remember that the exact date that the girl debuted was in 1920, however, you said in her earlier years as a child, she took inspiration from Armstrong's song What a Wonderful World, which was released in 1967. The dates does not seem to follow the correct order. Remember that the prompt is not about Science fiction that allows time travel. Please take note of the timeline next time.

Mark: 44/50