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Fluency Portfolio

Original Works

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 *What my childhood tasted like*

 **Brainstorm the foods of your childhood:**
*1. Boiled beef soup
2. Popcorn
3. A slice of bread with butter and honey
4. Frozen juice
5. Pickled vegetables***Choose one of the foods (the one with the best story attached to it):** *Frozen juice*

 Most people have never tried frozen juice. They don’t know how it tastes like. It tastes like ice cream, only so much better. One would say, “Juice isn’t supposed to be frozen, it is meant to be consumed like pure liquid!” No. In my childhood memories, I see tons and tons of plastic cups filled with frozen juice. It reminds me of the careless, slightly windy days back in the village, when nothing seemed to matter but the flavor of my frozen juice. Strawberries, oranges, apples, and smiles. I’d hide it here and there, because to my mother it was nothing but a cup of ice and artificial coloring. Oh mom, you just don’t get it, do you? I feel like adults will never truly understand the simple pleasures in life. My sweet, sweet childhood, only ever bitter when my mother tried to deprive me from what makes me happy. The irreplaceable sensation of sweet ice slowly melting in your mouth, releasing the fruity liquid that haunts your every sense and settles in that tiny space in the back of your brain where memories are kept. Forever. I would go to the local shop, an insignificantly small place where you could buy basic necessities. Most of which already far beyond their expiration date. The seller would curve his lips in an understanding smile and ask me, “What flavor?”, and I would willingly give the few coins I have for a cup of happiness. Whoever said money can’t buy happiness never tasted frozen juice. And then it would finally be mine. My palm would freeze and tremble as it holds my frozen juice in its warm embrace. The juice is always ready to melt for you, ready to sweeten and refresh your summer day. It is a major part of my every summer memory, a symbol of those endless days and nights, of the empty streets which me and my friends filled with laughter. Pure laughter. Genuine laughter. I remember exchanging cups, strawberry for apple, orange for raspberry, as if our friendship was all based on frozen juice, our bond as strong as the bonds between the water molecules in ice. Today, I rarely go to the village and I rarely drink frozen juice; it’s pretty unhealthy after all. But the small shop in my village is still there, preserving my most precious childhood memories.

 *Creating a* *Dystopia* The noise from the x-rays never muffled, it only grew louder. X-rays were always scanning. You could hide everything else but your organs. Any healthy kidney or liver, or heart, could be taken away at any time if the x-ray said so. And there were many of them, x-rays, wherever you go, they followed. They were planted in walls, in pavements, in furniture, one could even think his own mirror was an x-ray. Sometimes they would stop, but you could never know if you were scanned or not. The noise just kept on overgrowing. You had to live your life, conscious of the thought that your organs were not there to sustain your life, but grown and monitored to eventually take it away to create a new one. One that could actually be manipulated.
 None of the citizens of Scannedinavia actually remembered the Silent Times, what silence felt like, what it *sounded* like. It was as if this constant buzz could shut both the present and the past. In fact, the people were used to the noisiness, their sensory had adapted to it to a point that they no longer found it hard to hear beyond the noise. Noise was silence. True fear was caused by the haunting thought of the noise ever stopping. What if suddenly it became quiet and you started hearing your every breath? But of course, the Scannedinavian government would never permit that. There was never such a risk.
 The world outside was cold, permanently wrapped in fog. The absolute lack of any vegetation gave the people a feeling of isolation, as though they were all secluded somewhere nothing can survive. There were rumors that the fog was intentionally made to stop them from looking around. And it made sense. Otherwise how could the x-rays see everything clearly and not people. People weren’t supposed to know what’s happening around them. They had to know their own chamber in the Sanctum, the way to the Factory, to the Sportshall, and to the public park. A vicious circle. The park was the only place they could visit by their own free will. A relatively large аrea where the fog was just a bit sparser and they could ride a bike or do something of their own choice. The Sportshall was obligatory, since they had to keep their body healthy, and their organs in a perfect condition. The Factory, on the other hand, their workplace, was simply an occupation to distract. The citizens had hardly any idea why they were all appointed to do one and the same thing. The monotonous production of scissors, scalpels, and forceps. In fact most of them never even wondered why they did what they did, they never asked questions, they just knew they *had* to do it. The few people who knew why, knew everything else.
 Once in a month you would wake up and feel empty. You would feel like a part of you is missing. And most of the time, it was. It was missing and you could do nothing about it. If the x-ray saw something in you, it was already too late. They would take you at night, always at night, somewhere in those buildings hidden by the fog. In the morning, you would be back in your bed as if nothing had ever happened. Except it had. Scannedinavian citizens, though they existed homogenously, could be divided into two types – the oblivious and the aware ones. The oblivious lived their life exactly as they were supposed to, completely blind for what was being done to them. They went to work, they sweated hours and hours in the Sportshall, until ignorance quickly filled up the empty space where their organs had once been. The aware ones were the smart ones. They knew exactly what was happening, so they had to do everything they could to avoid it. They took on bad habits. Like smoking and drinking. Once organs were damaged they could no longer be used. Healthy organs, ironically, were your death warrant.