

Connect
Institute



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and all that lies in between.
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Birth,
death,
and all that lies
in between.

The first impact of the life's air towards our skin as our mothers throw us as newborns among the tides of the sea to the shores of life, our faces yet sanguine, a nostalgia surges in our blood to come back to the warmth of an alcove womb that constituted our first home after we swarmed as lifeless lowly sperms, and before that, through the nothingness. We had no form, and our humanity is about to come to form within the Godlike womb, where all beginning is, from which all stories begin.

Our first intake of life's breath surges like a hurricane that destabilizes the stillness and momentary silence awakening us to the beginning of our story. The newborn's pouting lips release their first cry, an echo of the harmonies that played within our being, an echo of the still reverberating sound of the first explosion of the universe; a manifestation and evidence of our evolution from the stardust. As our emergences sours, it is followed by a gallery of sounds and gentle movement; the heart beats stir like the pulse of the earth nucleus, moving and ticking of life's petrifying clock. The baby's tears run down, of fear and anticipation, prophesying the humane existential crisis that shall encounter them in their near undetermined future. Arms flap as a bird's wings attempting to swim under the dimness of the ocean, our vulnerability and epitome of weakness manifests itself, some are fortunate not to drown, some do and escape the beautiful tragedy of life that's conditioned to end with death.

In between, is a story, a poem, a book on the making. Its length is related to the external variables which may make our kiss with death possible. Each page, each chapter, each part, tells our story, in different tonalities, style, and rhythm...all changes as we grow between the two stages life and death. One of the most beautiful things about these books, is that they often read themselves while incomplete, as the nib scribbles down its inky path, the mourn or laugh over the preceding sentence, perhaps that is why, we love to hear stories of wisdom from people who are about to complete their book, who are nearing the end of the phase of life.

We run, we laugh, we cry, we scream, we howl, we love, we fall, we rise, we smile, we cry, and run through a vicious circle that both scares us and gives us an undeniable painful pleasure for its alive and ever changing nature, for all the emotional and existential possibilities it brings from us, and it makes us too, like the seasons, like the night and day, subjected to different states of minds, body, and emotion.

Then there is death. This grandiose beautiful thing that we always saw as evil, should perhaps be seen under a different light. Maybe the religious interpretations have pushed us to see death as something diabolic although it isn't. We see it as if it's responsible for taking life away from us, while in fact, it only rests as we live through the phase of life, waiting for us to embrace it again, although it is only us who give up life while it's still omnipresent, vibrant, and vivid. Death is but our return to our initial stage of being, or rather our nonexistence. We become again the lucid nothingness, the silence and the void that we lived before our birth. It resembles the blankness of our memory to what preceded our fall in the womb. Death should be seen as tender, as something that's merciful and just as meaningful. It is but the familiar closure we see in a story. Death covers us with its blanket upon the dusk of our death where there is no judgment, hatred, anxiety or fear, nor love, excitement, or joy; only our molecules intertwining again with the universe and recycling as air through the lungs of others with their extraterrestrial consciousness.

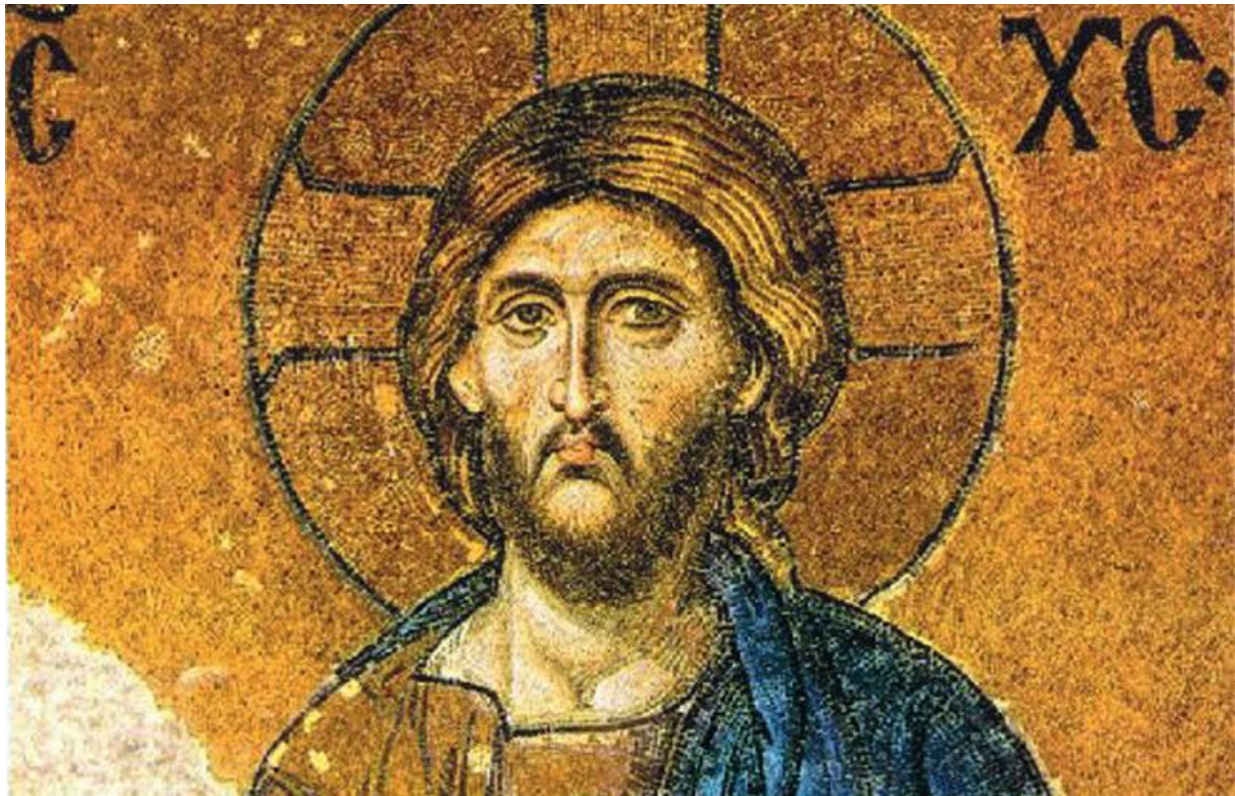
This life, what lies in between birth and death, should be lived to its extremity, it should be loved like a dying lover whom we kiss and hold anticipating their moment of departure, so that when time arrives for us to embrace death and its tranquility, we would be aware, that yes, we loved, we lived, and death was but the beautiful tragic ending of a mortal's story.



Feed 81 : AIDA ALAMI

Aida Alami est l'image d'une journaliste marocaine qui s'est éclose ailleurs : France, USA, Pays arabes... Cette jeune femme a quitté son pays d'origine à l'âge de 18 ans, en quête de liberté et de vérité car d'après elle : « le patriotisme est de montrer aux citoyens ce qui est caché, est ne pas accepter ce que les gouvernements disent ». Par ailleurs, cette militante acharnée considère le journalisme comme un moyen de réformer certains systèmes corrompus et non une source d'enrichissement facile.

Chapeau à cette femme qui, par son sérieux et sa détermination, a créé une ambiance de motivation chez les jeunes de Connect Institut.



FORGIVENESS

People spend their entire lives making mistakes and asking for forgiveness. It is the natural cycle of mankind. It's always been that way and every single religion has a tale of betrayal and forgiveness. In Christianity for example, the story of "Judas Iscariot" is the most famous. Judas was one of Jesus' twelve disciples who betrayed him for only thirty silver coins. Jesus of course forgave him, that is the essence behind Jesus of Nazareth, forgiveness.

It is believed that Judas couldn't live with betrayal he had committed so he hang himself. The moral here being that even though he was forgiven by Jesus he was never able to forgive himself. Which is worse - not to being forgiven by the one you betray, whether it's your God or someone else, or not-being able to forgive yourself? I can say from my experience, forgiving yourself for a mistake is one of the hardest things in life. The good thing about forgiveness is that your God will forgive you, you only have to ask for it. In most cases humans on the other hand aren't so forgiving.



UN LIVRE AU PAYS d'OMISSON

“La lumière est dans le livre. Ouvrez le livre tout grand. Laissez-le rayonner, laissez-le faire”

J'étais très jeune quand j'ai découvert un livre pour la première fois, à ce que je me rappelle, âgée de cinq ans, toute petite cherchant à déceler les mystères de ce monde. Je ne savais pas encore lire, mais les images de ce premier livre étaient suffisantes pour que je le prenne en main. J'étais encore petite, curieuse et j'avais le courage d'ouvrir un livre. J'étais sur la bonne voie jusqu'au jour où l'on m'a dit qu'un livre quelle que soit sa langue, tant qu'il n'est pas destiné aux enfants, il est interdit de le lire pour que je puisse me concentrer sur mes études. « Concentre-toi sur tes cours sinon le prof va te punir » - et malgré cela j'ai été punie.

Je ne détestais pas encore les livres, je voulais juste faire les devoirs et éviter le bâton de mon cher maître. Pendant douze ans d'études, je ne lisais pas de livres, sauf les trois ouvrages imposés par notre fructueux système éducatif en deuxième année du lycée! Oui, trois ouvrages en douze ans!

Ma tante a toujours l'habitude de m'envoyer des livres de la France que je ne lisais pas, bien sûr. Un jour, après avoir fêté mes vingt ans, j'ai décidé de reprendre la lecture. J'ai enfin retrouvé ce courage, jusqu'au jour où l'on m'a dit « pourquoi tu lis ces livres, tu perds ton temps, cela ne va pas te donner de quoi manger, concentre-toi sur ton diplôme... en plus, nous ne sommes pas des chrétiens pour lire cette foutaise! », « Ces livres prennent beaucoup d'espace à la maison, nous devons les jeter! ». De cette façon, j'ai horreur de lire, mais je ne déteste pas les livres. Je veux retrouver mon courage à nouveau, je veux naviguer dans ces bouquins omis.



BROKEN ANGEL

On our way back home, my friend and I decided to have a seat next to the beach for a couple minutes and have a girls' talk. While being engaged in a deep conversation about life and future plans, a young lady came towards us. Wearing a long black outfit, she seemed sad and scared, as she got closer, she asked us a weird question: "Is there's a punch streak on my face?... does it look bad ?!" Curbing tears in her eyes and asking more questions. I dared to ask her what has happened to her. But I was totally shocked to hear that she was beaten and punched by her dear husband after having a normal conversation near the beach. What a romantic scene!! Furthermost, she continued "it was not the first time." She brought out her phone while talking from her bag and showed me a picture of hers with a huge gash on her angelic face. again, it was her husband who did it. Tears were falling relentlessly down her cheeks, hardly breathing. At that moment I stopped, hopeless and shocked in front of her. Thousands of questions were invading my mind, what kind of a man is he? How did he dare to beat her? Who gave him such right? But before these questions slipped through my mouth, she said with a shaking voice "because I'm too weak, he used me, he treats me like a slave, he beats me everytime he gets the chance to.he never loved me."



وليدة الشتاء

حنين غريب يشدني من حين لآخر و رغبة جامحة في أن تلامس حبات المطر ملابسي ثم تخترقها وصولاً الى بشرتي. تسقي مسامات جلدي و تنتهش فأزهر. ينطفأ شحوبي و ينجلي حزني. لا أعلم سبب ولهي بفصل الشتاء؟ لكن! لدي اعتقاد أن السر وراء هذا الميل يرجع إلى تاريخ مولدي؛ أنا وليدة فصل الشتاء. أحسه فصلاً صادقاً يفنيك عن نفاق البشر في الصيف و محبتهم الزائفة و عناقهم المقنع. فيه الكل غاض بصره، مطأطأ رأسه وسط الغطاء المتصل بمعطفه. لا يراك ولا تكاد تراه، يمشي مهرولاً لحماية نفسه من المطر. غايته الوصول إلى بيته الذي لا يفادره إلا للضرورة. الشتاء فصل المشاعر، فصل الحنين، وفصل الحب الذي يجعلك تشعر به رغم انعدامه.

THERE IS NO CHALLENGE MORE THAN THE CHALLENGE TO IMPROVE OURSELVES

It is known that the desires of the heart are often contradicted with the inner reason. But I didn't expect that one day, I will suffer because of this bad reality. My experience with these two deeply concepts started October 2017. When I first tried to experience new things and break my daily routine by applying to Connect Institute. The moment I applied, my family, my friends and my boyfriend, stood against the idea.

First, there was my mother's and sister's refutation, they said : "Are you crazy? Why you usually choose the hardest things to do? Four buses every day! You are a girl and you live alone far from us, we won't accept your decision". They were pushing me to focus on my university studies.

Besides my family I had to convince my best friends. I tried to clarify that I have to work on myself, so, Although I don't have enough time to meet them, because of my heavy university schedule, it doesn't mean that I forgot them or I don't care about our friendship anymore. In fact, I realized that I have to enrich my mentality and to build my personality. But unfortunately they got it the wrong way.

The hardest stage was when I tried to convince my boyfriend, he didn't even want to listen. He just objurgated me, saying that once you started going to the Institute you changed. His words hurt me and pushed me to think a billion times, whether I am on the right path or not.

But once I rethink that I am one of the 30 candidates selected among 500 application, to be in "MOMKIN" program.

I personally consider it as a big achievement, because I finally found the space where I can express myself freely without boundaries. Connect institute is a place where there is people who do not only believe in my capacities but also other youth's and teenagers's abilities.

I believe that the institute combines motivation, help, creativity and success indeed.

IT'S TIME FOR LIVING IN PEACE

Nowadays, we live in a world full of stereotypes, judgments, worries, and where there is almost no trust between communities nor people. A lot of people think that they are better than the others just because they belong to a certain religion, community, or country.

From where I look at it, MENA region, hate and judgements are widespread and people accept it without any problem.

It's important to talk about living together in our region, which is a huge issue. Every day there are new emerging conflicts, without any solution. That's why I think that it's high time for us to act, and take initiatives, either to solve the current problems, or to avoid new ones. For me, the first thing we could do is to reform our education system. Education is the key, so we have to teach our people about living together, tolerance and having a critical thinking. This way, we can't judge each other. I believe that youth, in a region full of wars and conflicts such as ours should consider living together as a cause, and try to establish a community dialogue, defending human rights, and democracy, but first we must avoid judging people based on their colors, religions or any other aspect, because labels are the opposite of understanding and living together. I think that being aware that even with all the differences between us, we are still the same, we are human, is the most important step to build peace and live together.

To conclude, I hope that one day, in the near future, we could live peacefully without any fears.

