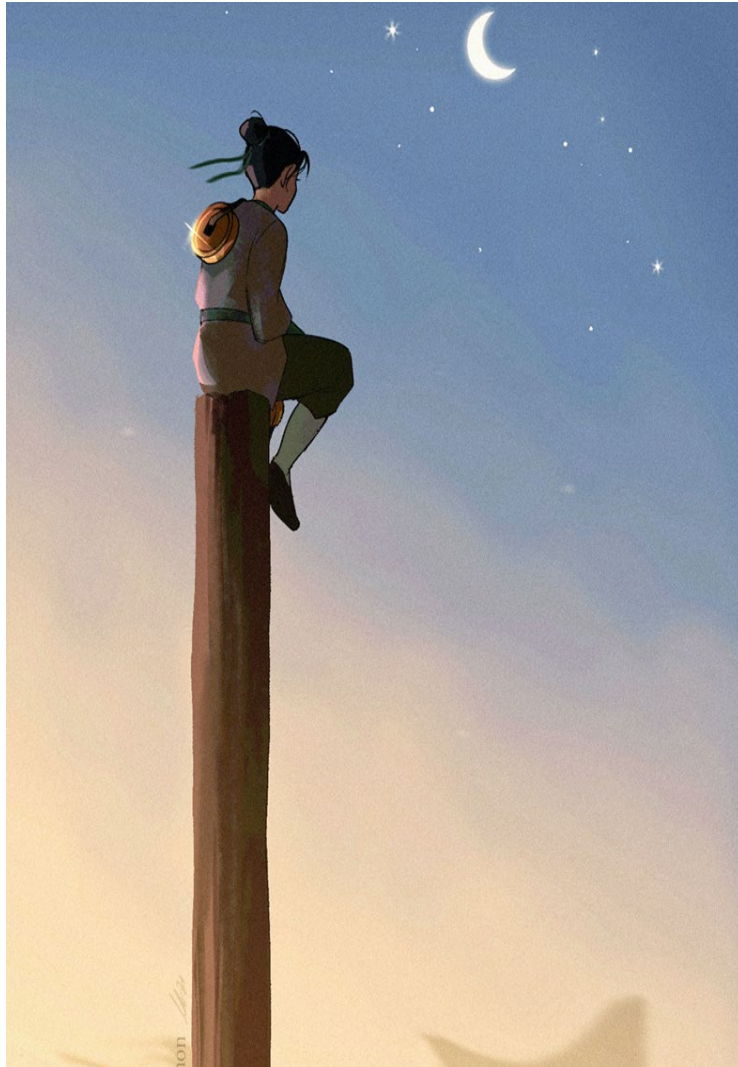


The Daughter with Wisdom that blooms in Adversity



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Without pain or obstacles wisdom wouldn't be possible. For example, in life we must

observe and accept all of our failures and mistakes and allow it to create a better version of ourselves in order to progress amongst society. Women mature faster than men and often have more responsibilities and pressure in how they are expected to behave and maintain the image as a proper daughter. In the novel *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee, it mainly focuses the challenges and discrimination Koreans experienced during the colonization of Japan. The female protagonist Sunja is coming of age and is aware of the tensions that come with womanhood. In the following novel *Breath Eyes Memory* by Edwidge Danticat, Sophie is the leading lady and she migrates from Haiti to the United States in search of a new life filled with resources. Women in the novel are victims of sexual violence and are unable to overcome the trauma resulting in distress. Both Sunja and Sophie challenge the idea of autonomy. They value wisdom and healing because that is what allows a woman to prosper and succeed in society.

Wisdom creates an understanding between uncertainty and reality. When someone is aware of their personal values and rights they are able to guide themselves into a good life. However, in order for someone to possess wisdom they must be able to accept maturity. In *Pachinko* Sunja is the only child of the household who was able to survive. Her siblings all died during labor; however, Sunja was viewed as the miracle baby who was healthy enough to be born. Hoonie was Sunja's father and passed away due to an illness. This affected the lives of Yangjin who is Sunja's mother and the other women because men were the ones in charge of providing for the families. Women were in charge of the household however without a man in the family they suffered and had to work extra harder. The father's death was devastating because the women had to be the ones to work and suffered throughout the annexation of the Japanese empire in Korea. "A woman's life is endless work and suffering. There is suffering and then more suffering. It's better to expect it, you know. You're becoming a woman now, so you

should be told this" (Lee 43). Pachinko plays with binaries such as youth and maturity and also girlhood as womanhood in regards to Sunja's journey. Sunja was told by Mrs. Jun the harsh reality in which a woman is expected to endure the suffering that comes with their gender in society. Sunja learns this the hard way when she was harassed by the Japanese boys. That incident was the day Sunja lost her innocence; it is on that day she was a victim of harassment. It was that day Hansu told her she should never walk alone, and it is that day she met the man who will eventually take advantage of her. The Virtue I chose to practice is an important one to practice in my life because I wouldn't be the woman I am today if I had not gone through my previous life events. I decided it was time to let go of anything that does not serve or benefit me. I removed the toxicity that was holding me back from accomplishing my career. Eventually, I allowed those life experiences to guide me into a better understanding of the reason why I had to accept my past and grow as an individual. There is no such thing as losing in life. We either win or we learn and that is something no one can ever take away from me.

A woman becomes stronger when being strong is the only option she has to ever overcome any circumstance. In *Breath Eyes Memory*, Sophie's life in America is a challenging one because the problems from her native country eventually travel with her to America. The novel has little to no male figures except for Sophie's husband Joseph. The absence of men in the novel represents a matriarchal society in which the mothers of the household have complete dominance over their daughters. "My mother is a daffodil, limber and strong as one. My mother is a daffodil, but in the wind, iron strong" (Danticat 89). Sophie makes the connection of the disturbances and trauma she inherited due to her sexual assault however she views her mother as a bold woman despite her trauma. Martine manages to represent to Sophie the true strength a woman is capable of, so when she becomes a mother she is able to guide her daughter into the

right path in life. Mother's provide safety, love, and spiritual growth. The Virtue I chose, wisdom is not taught through school or education. Wisdom is taught through the person itself based on their past experiences and coming of age. Growing up I noticed that my mother worked harder than anyone else in my family despite going through a divorce. Although I was young I realized the true image of womanhood and my mother is that woman. I am the daughter of an immigrant however that never stopped her from creating a beautiful life for me and my brother. I owe all of my wisdom and motivation to my mother because without her I wouldn't be able to accomplish all my goals and dreams. We are not able to change the past because it already happened and it is behind me. However, I feel positive for the future because I can at least make the right choices and better myself.

Inner peace is the key to a relaxing and balanced life. It can also eliminate fears and worries because often those are the factors that are known to prevent someone from blossoming in their journey. In the reading "The Tao of womanhood: Nature's wisdom for today's women" it addresses the significance of Tao Te Ching which is a book about wisdom written by Laozi that dates back to the fourth century B.C. and how the poems have positively impacted the lives of women. The Tao Te Ching is a collection of various poems that focus on wisdom and healing. Poetry educates us to face our troubles and exhale our thoughts because life is known to be unpredictable. However, the purpose of poetry is to allow the thoughts and feelings to flow and that results in clarity within ourselves. The woman who listens/ To her own quiet wisdom/ Creates harmony/ In her world (Dreher 3). Tao allows people to accept the way life is because there are many things outside of our control. Our bodies are able to heal themselves from any diseases or foreign substances. However, the mind can heal itself as well as long as you feed yourself positivity, wisdom and peace. The Tao is a sacred tradition that benefited the lives of

many women because society can be brutal towards women. However, these poems are a safe space for women to be able to heal from an intense world. What I have gained from inserting Wisdom into my life is self love and a peaceful attitude within my journey. I learned things the hard way however I do not take those lessons for granted because I want to become an advocate for others because I remembered needing someone and no one was there. I took the responsibility of saving myself and healing myself because I realized I am all I have in this life. That is why I never back down and I proudly pat myself on the shoulders because not everyone can say they were able to remove themselves from a dark place. In my twenties I realized that this is the age where I will learn the most and lose the most people. However, I came to the conclusion that as long as I do not lose myself then I am able to overcome what disturbs my motivation. I lost contact with a lot of people who I used to call my friends and family for a reason. That reason was to find myself and value myself. My personal reward from wisdom is gratitude. I appreciate the support system in my life, the ones who check on me when I get quiet. Practicing gratitude daily is linked to healing from unhappiness or anger because I noticed I became content with my progress and living without regrets. The times I wanted to quit and give up I managed to remind myself the reason why I started and that's something that has allowed me to not lose focus of my mission and purpose.

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