



Harmonious Voices

Everyone has a distinctive voice and an obligation to use that voice to share their perspectives and beliefs. At the Deckel Edge Literary Festival, we found that these voices can combine to create a harmony. What follows are fictionalized accounts of real people's struggle to embrace their diversity and find their inner voice.

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“ *A strong voice opens your mind up to all different points of view.* ”

I heard a whisper one breezy afternoon,
 Feeling uninspired since the sun was setting soon,
 It gradually became louder, too loud to easily ignore,
 Until it was like a speaker, and it shook me to the core,
 Suddenly it stopped, but the ringing seemed to persist,
 And when I opened my eyes, I saw things I must've missed –
 The world seemed more impressive, lighter in a way,
 Inspiration was everywhere, the sky was no longer grey,
 I walked outside and saw the world had transformed into art,
 The voice gave me rose-colored glasses, but I knew they there
 from the start.



Inspired by Sharice



Inspired by Adam

“Part of the responsibility of having a voice is realizing when you just need to shut up and listen.”

I am shamefully lucky to have won the
 lottery of birth.
 My voice is privilege;
 I was created to be listened to.
 I am fortunate to have a voice that will
 always be heard,
 but I am guilty because I have taken it
 from those who need it most.

“ *I will happily be a voice for those who feel they* ”

My voice is a duty.
 I refuse to shut up and listen – I can't afford to.
 I'll raise my voice if I have to,
 until every one of my peers who feel
 they don't have a voice are spoken for.
 Why should injustices be ignored?
 I will breathe words into conflicts no one dares to
 whisper of,
 and I won't stop yelling until I lose my voice.

“ *We all have a story to tell, we just need a chance to tell it.* ”

I strive to write stories that last -
 to immortalize narratives so those that die never truly do,
 But I struggle to recognize if anyone wants to listen
 To what I think I need to say
 will it be accepted, revered with esteem?
 Do I need to speak more softly? To be less volatile?
 We all have something important to say,
 But do we all have someone willing to listen?



Inspired by Jessica

Inspired by Klaria



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