

Warning: This is not an original story.

You've seen this story everywhere;

My first introduction was the show Avatar: The Last Airbender;

A story with an established Beginning,
An uncertain Present,
And a spiritual Future;

Within 61 episodes,
I found a universe that could hold space for my life in all its complexity.

Here is a piece of that universe:

Book 1: Earth

Episode 0: The Apple and The Tree

My Father was born in the lands of Alkebulan, formerly known as The Garden of Eden.

In the Beginning, Light was created in the form of a Big Bang.

After some time, this Light was given as a gift to humanity in the form of a Sun.

In its infinite mercy,

The Sun granted one rule for Eternal Life:

Never use your life force to create or destroy the matter provided to you.

In Chemistry,

This is known as the First Law of Thermodynamics,

And as someone with a chemistry degree,

I finally understand why they say knowledge is a curse.

I may not know exactly when we were banished from our happy ending,

But in a world threatened by nuclear bombs, I doubt anyone else knows either.

So instead of wondering how a single apple could be so expensive,

I've started asking myself who paid it to grow.

Book 2: Fire

Episode 0: The Bread and The Body

I grew up in the Roman Catholic school system and in a similar vein to how Jesus probably felt about the Romans, I don't have many good things to say.

My earliest instances of racism by both staff and students was at age 7,
Primarily outside the classroom.

In the case of homophobia, it was age 15,
Primarily inside the classroom.

I get the impression that the problem with religious institutions has nothing to do with the religions themselves and everything to do with how institutions are designed to function.

Every time I go to church and receive my weekly circle of mass-produced "bread",
I always wonder why we aren't just eating a meal together.

Was that not The Last Supper?

Was that not The Fish and The Loaves?

Was the whole point not just feeding people for the sake of being fed?

Where did we lose the plot?

Why are kids coming to school hungry?

Why are people dying outside of locked, warm buildings full of food?

Why does food cost money in the first place?

As much as I want to be mad about the presence of injustice in this world,

I don't have the privilege of righteous anger,

My neighbours have called the police on me for crimes I haven't even committed,

I was literally assaulted by a stranger three weeks ago for simply walking;

How much more Black suffering do we need to see before we accept that we're all just burnt out:

Maybe we all just need some sleep.

Maybe we all just need a good meal.

Maybe we all just need some time to ourselves to exist,

To appreciate the fact that we were born into living bodies, so full of love and grace,

That even when we lose focus of our breath, the oxygen still finds a path.

I know we'll make it; I just hope it doesn't cost everything.