

Evan D. Luu

14 June 2018

## A Refugee's Sacrifice

When I was eighteen years old, I lost everything important to me.

My home, My people, My language, all of it was lost in a sea of Americanness

Stretching the racial color rainbow from white to black, even though I may look like some

Americans. I was the one that was always excluded for being different.

Broken English, weird names, alien behavior that was how we were labeled.

The people that were viewed as nothing more than a product of an unwanted war.

Unwanted survivors, potential terrorists, non-Americans.

That was how we were seen in the eyes of Americans.

These Americans do not see past our war hardened exteriors.

Beneath our exteriors, we hold more pain and suffering than one would ever encounter here.

Americans, they only seen it through the screens of their electronic windows.

They will never experience the trauma of seeing bodies with escaping organs and blood,

Bodies that could or could not be themselves within the next few days.

They will never experience the corruption wars brings to your home

Nor will they experience missiles and bombs destroying your world.

It might have been a decade after those traumatic events but all

I have left from times are the burns and scars of running

And running towards salvation.

Salvation from the haters, the killers, the enemies, the demons

Therefore, we keep on running,

We keep on running at the cost of our pride, our self-respect, our everything

The reason being that we lost all that in the war

And we gave it up to become

American.

To my sleeping child, the only thing I want from you is to be American

As my constant running is from me being different,

Never do I want you to become shackled by my history

However, I want you to run

To run not so that you run from this hell

But to run free in life.

## Acceptance

I was in my early adulthood when I discovered my parent's history.

It was only during this time that I learned how much I was wrong.

Two decades, of lies, oppression, and resentment has taken its toll on me.

However, it was nothing compared to the pain that you felt when you were around my age.

Mom, Dad

I will never know what it is like to forcibly lose everything,

To forcibly sacrifice everything,

Or to lose your identity in the firestorm, we call war.

However, I still feel your hands on me,

The hands that have scarred me for life, they are still on me.

They are constantly touching the wounds that you have left on me.

They are like loose shackles that only serve as a reminder of my past.

The merciless need to succeed,

The draconic order of masculinity,

The constant obsession of how people look at us.

All of these are now just scars

Both on the inside and the outside.

Scars that drove me to run.

As I decided to run from the bounds of confinement.

I'm sorry, I'm so sorry that I ran away.

Learning about the atrocities that occurred in your home country,

It has given me clarity on the problems of my life.

The constant fear of strangers, the need to survive, the need of money,

The oppression of feelings.

They were not an inherent problem with you,

Rather they were the result of your past affecting you.

As really, we are both survivors of our pain,

We are both insiders in a world of outsiders.

However, like you I need to take this pain,

And keep on moving. Moving and remembering all that came before us

As really the biggest sin that I could commit is not knowing.

I'm sorry, I'm so sorry for not knowing your history.