

June 2025

# Pulse

**your beat, your pulse, your story**

An Unforgettable Cultural  
**Exchange at Our  
School**

By Maria Susana Oliva

El Retorno a

**LaCiencia  
Viva**

By Ms. Airinne Guardo Macott

Mathematics Education  
in the Era of **Information**  
and **Communication**  
**Technologies**

By: Alexander Castro Bowen



Cartagena  
International  
School



## Welcome to PULSE Magazine

### The Heartbeat of Cartagena International School

**PULSE Magazine** is a bilingual publication created to cultivate a genuine love for writing and journalism among students and **teachers at Cartagena International School.**

This collaborative project between the **English Department** and the **Marketing Team** serves as a vibrant platform to share personal reflections, school stories, and memorable moments through writing and photography, in both English and Spanish.

More than just a school magazine, **PULSE** is an opportunity for students to develop their writing skills, enrich their personal portfolios, and strengthen university applications with published work that demonstrates leadership and initiative. Whether through essays, articles, or photo-narratives, contributors leave their mark on the school's creative and academic legacy.

Teachers also play a vital role by sharing their own stories and classroom insights, fostering a stronger sense of community and connection across campus.

We proudly recognise the winners of this edition's best essays: **Leonardo Guerra, Etienne Lasure, and Mateo Velázquez**, whose work stood out for its originality, voice, and insight.

With every issue, PULSE continues to be the pulse of our school

**where voices are heard, stories are shared, and creativity thrives.**





**Cartagena  
International  
School**



*Diagramación*

**Carlos Vélez & Fabio Bru**

*Fotografía:*

**Valentina Prasca**

*Dirección:*

**Dlamela Acosta**

*Impresión:*

**Print Creativos Ctg.**

*Nº edición:*

**001**

# An Unforgettable Cultural Exchange at Our School



On January 13th, 2025 was an extraordinary day at our school. We had the privilege of welcoming a group of students from James Madison University in Virginia, United States. The main purpose of their visit was to learn about our culture, school, and way of life while practicing their Spanish. At the same time, we were excited to sharpen our English skills and share the essence of Colombian culture with them.

From the moment they arrived, you could feel the excitement in the air. We with a tour

of the school, showing them our classrooms, facilities, and the little details that make our school unique. They were genuinely curious, asking questions in Spanish and making us laugh with their determination to get it right. It felt amazing to help them improve their Spanish, and their enthusiasm motivated us to speak more confidently in English.

After the tour, we gathered for a cultural exchange session. We talked about our traditions, daily routines, and even compa-



red school systems. We were surprised to learn about the differences in how we approach education and the similarities that unite us as students.

The highlight of the day, however, was when we taught them how to dance champeta. They were hesitant at first, but soon enough, everyone was laughing, moving to the rhythm, and enjoying the moment. Some of them were naturals, and others had two left feet, but that only made it more fun. It felt

like we were breaking down barriers and creating memories that will last a lifetime.

In return, they shared some fun stories about life in the U.S., their favorite holidays, and even taught us a few American slang phrases. It was so interesting to hear about their lives and realize how much we can learn from each other.

By the end of the day, we felt like we had made new friends. This experience reminded me of how powerful language and culture can be in connecting people. It also motivated me to keep improving my English and to appreciate the beauty of sharing my own culture with others.

This cultural exchange wasn't just about practicing a language—it was about building bridges, understanding each other, and creating connections that go beyond words.



**By Maria Susana Oliva**

# Mathematics Education in the Era of **Information** and **Communication** **Technologies**

By: Alexander Castro Bowen





*Mathematics is the science of order and measure, of beautiful chains of reasoning, all simple and easy.*



**René Descartes**

I begin these reflections and considerations on mathematics education with this quote from Descartes, as I have used it to start my classes for many years. A common remark from my students is: "Professor, are they really EASY?" And my answer has always been a resounding YES. I always say, let us affirm YES today, and although some may doubt, we will reflect on this Descartes quote again at the end of the school year.

Today, I believe teaching is an act of bravery, given that we live in a world where education—or at least taking full advantage of it—is not a priority for many families and, consequently, many young people. There is also a prevalent belief that everything can be found on the internet or done for us. Particularly in the case of mathematics education, the question arises: What role do mathematics teachers play in this universal conception?

It is a fact that 70% of today's students are immersed in social media, video games, and apps (according to Forbes magazine, February 2024 edition). This is evident in our classrooms and, beyond that, in the work we

receive from our students. In pondering the answer to this question, my view is that mathematics teachers must act as bridges between the latest technological trends and the knowledge outlined in Colombia's basic learning rights. It is no longer just about finding answers but also about accessing all the steps and procedures. Hence, it is necessary to integrate these technologies into our classroom practice and use them as tools for learning.

To achieve this, we must have a clear lesson plan that not only outlines the topics but also specifies the competencies we aim to strengthen. This approach allows us to select the most appropriate tools. Let's make digital tools allies, not enemies, in our educational work, and show students how these tools can help them not only see but also understand and apply all those "simple and easy" reasonings Descartes spoke of.

This article serves as a preamble to a project titled "STEM AI: Transforming Mathematics Learning", which will be implemented with high school students to create dynamic learning spaces and strengthen their mathematical understanding.



*Specialist Mathematics Teacher  
Associate Member of the Colombian  
Society of Mathematics Research  
Associate of the Latin American  
Network of Educational Statistics*



Cartagena  
International  
School

# "Their Dreams, Our Purpose"



Follow  
your  
dreams



**By Ms. Airinne Guardo Macott**

¿Cuándo fue la última vez que viste a un estudiante asombrarse al observar una reacción química o maravillarse al descubrir la biodiversidad en un ecosistema? Estos momentos, que construyen el amor por aprender, hoy son una realidad.

La reapertura de las prácticas de laboratorio y el regreso de las salidas pedagógicas en el Cartagena International School son parte de una propuesta del área de ciencias naturales que busca revitalizar el aprendizaje experiencial, en el que la exploración y el contacto directo con la naturaleza y todo lo que nos rodea sean pilares del desarrollo integral de nuestros estudiantes.



El laboratorio es el corazón palpitante de la enseñanza de las ciencias. Es en este espacio donde los estudiantes pasan de ser receptores pasivos de conocimiento a convertirse en investigadores activos. Aquí, las teorías abstractas cobran vida mediante la observación directa y el análisis crítico.

Por ejemplo, cuando un estudiante mide la densidad de un líquido, observa una reacción química, corrobora leyes, analiza la cinética de una reacción o identifica una muestra bajo el microscopio, está desarrollando habilidades esenciales como el pensamiento crítico, la resolución de problemas, la capacidad de formular hipótesis y redac-



El Retorno a

# La Ciencia Viva

tar conclusiones a partir de sus observaciones. Estas experiencias, imposibles de replicar completamente en el aula, fomentan una conexión más profunda con los conceptos científicos y permiten al estudiante experimentar el método científico en acción.

Es importante anotar que el impacto del laboratorio trasciende las ciencias. La capacidad de observar detenidamente, registrar datos con precisión y argumentar con base en la evidencia son competencias transversales que fortalecen su desempeño en otras áreas.

Por otro lado, el retorno de las salidas pedagógicas complementa esta visión al llevar el aprendizaje fuera de las paredes del aula. Los ecosistemas, parques y centros de investigación ofrecen a los estudiantes oportunidades únicas de aprender en un contexto real. Imaginen un recorrido por una reserva natural donde puedan identificar especies, analizar interacciones ecológicas y comprender la importancia de conservar la biodiversidad.

Estas experiencias enriquecen el aprendizaje no solo desde una perspectiva académica, sino también emocional y social. Al convivir y trabajar en equipo, los estudiantes

fortalecen valores como la cooperación, el respeto y la empatía, mientras desarrollan un sentido de responsabilidad hacia el entorno y su comunidad.

La reapertura de los laboratorios y el retorno de las salidas pedagógicas requieren del esfuerzo conjunto de toda la comunidad educativa. Padres, docentes y directivos debemos asumir el desafío de garantizar la seguridad, la organización y el aprovechamiento máximo de estas actividades.

Implementar protocolos de bioseguridad, adquirir materiales actualizados y planificar salidas que sean inclusivas y accesibles son pasos indispensables para asegurar el éxito de esta propuesta. Además, será crucial fomentar el entusiasmo y la curiosidad de nuestros estudiantes, recordándoles que aprender no es un acto pasivo, sino una

aventura constante.

En un mundo que enfrenta retos globales como el cambio climático, la pérdida de biodiversidad y los avances vertiginosos de la tecnología, es más importante que nunca formar estudiantes críticos, curiosos y comprometidos. La reapertura de los laboratorios y el regreso de las salidas pedagógicas son más que actividades escolares; son una inversión en el futuro de nuestros jóvenes y, por ende, en el futuro de nuestra sociedad.

Desde el equipo de ciencias naturales, invitamos a la comunidad educativa a unir esfuerzos para hacer de este proyecto una constante. Con compromiso, ingenio y organización, podemos devolver a nuestros estudiantes la experiencia viva de aprender, experimentar y descubrir. ¡El laboratorio y el mundo exterior nos esperan!



Visita Aviario Nacional de Colombia - Isla Barú



La Educación Integral:

# Clave para el éxito en un **Mundo Globalizado**

By: Vicerrector Eliecer Orozco



En la actualidad, las Instituciones Educativas líderes, como el Cartagena International School, enfrentan el desafío de preparar a sus estudiantes no solo para superar asignaturas, sino para destacar en un mundo globalizado y altamente competitivo. En este contexto, las instituciones han de enfocarse en aspectos clave como la innovación tecnológica, el emprendimiento, la formación

bilingüe y el desarrollo de habilidades socioemocionales. Estos pilares fortalecen las capacidades individuales de los estudiantes y los convierten en ciudadanos integrales, preparados para liderar y aportar soluciones a los retos presentes y futuros.

Vivimos en un mundo dinámico y en constante transformación. Sin embargo, estas



nuevas dinámicas a veces pueden influir en la forma en que abordamos los valores fundamentales como el respeto y el compromiso. En el ámbito escolar, estas situaciones pueden generar diferencias que, si no se manejan de manera adecuada, afectan la convivencia y la relación entre las familias y la escuela. Por ello, invitamos a las familias a privilegiar el diálogo respetuoso y construc-

tivo como la primera opción para resolver cualquier inquietud académica o de convivencia. Antes de considerar mecanismos formales que pueden resultar desgastantes, es fundamental agotar el recurso más humano y efectivo: la conversación abierta entre familias y escuela. Este tipo de diálogo puede culminar en acuerdos que fortalezcan la relación y eviten situaciones innecesarias.

Además, en la era digital, es importante reflexionar sobre el uso de aplicaciones y canales de comunicación no oficiales, que en ocasiones pueden generar desinformación o malentendidos. Invitamos a las familias a utilizarlos con respeto y prudencia, verificando siempre cualquier información directamente con la institución antes de actuar. Una comunicación responsable y un manejo emocional adecuado pueden prevenir conflictos y garantizar un entorno de convivencia centrado en el bienestar de los estudiantes.

El respeto es el eje transversal de toda formación y convivencia. Una educación de calidad se potencia cuando las familias promueven valores como el respeto, la responsabilidad y el compromiso. Según un informe del Banco Mundial, el acompañamiento de los padres en el proceso educativo incrementa en un 20% el rendimiento académico de los estudiantes. Esto nos recuerda que el respeto mutuo y el trabajo conjunto entre familias y docentes son la base para construir un modelo educativo que garantice el bienestar y el desarrollo integral de los estudiantes.

Por otro lado, un estudio reciente de la OCDE resalta que los estudiantes que desarrollan competencias socioemocionales,

como la oratoria y el trabajo en equipo, tienen un 35% más de probabilidades de destacar en su vida profesional y emprendedora. En este sentido, el Cartagena International School ha sido un referente al integrar programas de intercambio cultural, proyectos tecnológicos y actividades de emprendimiento que fomentan no solo el aprendizaje académico, sino también la capacidad de los estudiantes para desenvolverse en diferentes entornos y culturas. Estas experiencias enriquecen su formación y los preparan para enfrentar con éxito los desafíos de un mundo interconectado.

En conclusión, nuestra propuesta educativa es una invitación a mirar más allá de las aulas. Es un llamado a padres, estudiantes y docentes a trabajar juntos para formar líderes integrales que transformen positivamente su entorno. Con innovación, emprendimiento, tecnología, bilingüismo, respeto y diálogo, estamos construyendo una generación de talentos que dejará una huella significativa en el mundo.



Vicerrector  
Mr. Eliecer Orozco



## Algunos consejos prácticos para fortalecer esta alianza familia-escuela:

### **Fomente el diálogo respetuoso:**

Antes de tomar cualquier acción formal, converse directamente con los docentes o la institución sobre sus inquietudes. El entendimiento mutuo suele ser la mejor solución.

### **Escuche antes de actuar:**

Es importante considerar todas las versiones de los hechos antes de tomar decisiones. Esto fomenta una convivencia armónica y evita malentendidos.

### **Evite los rumores:**

Verifique siempre la información recibida en grupos de WhatsApp directamente con la institución. Esto previene conflictos innecesarios.

### **Participe activamente:**

Asista a reuniones, eventos y actividades escolares. Su compromiso refuerza el vínculo entre la familia y la institución y motiva a sus hijos.

### **Refuerce los valores en casa:**

Modele comportamientos basados en respeto, responsabilidad y empatía. Estos valores son fundamentales para el desarrollo integral de sus hijos.

### **Fomente el bilingüismo y la curiosidad tecnológica:**

Realice actividades sencillas en inglés, como leer cuentos, ver películas o cantar canciones. Refuerce el aprendizaje tecnológico explorando aplicaciones educativas juntos.

*Con respeto, comunicación efectiva y colaboración, podemos construir un entorno educativo enriquecedor para todos en este contexto globalizado.*

La importancia del

# emprendimiento y el liderazgo

en las  
generaciones  
jóvenes:

## Claves para el futuro



By. Sofia Duarte Mantilla



En un mundo en constante transformación, donde la innovación y el cambio son la norma, las habilidades de emprendimiento y liderazgo se perfilan como indispensables para los niños y jóvenes de hoy. Estas competencias no solo les preparan para un entorno laboral cada vez más competitivo y dinámico, sino también para convertirse en ciudadanos activos y agentes de cambio en sus comunidades.

*Más allá de emprender:  
¿Qué significa ser emprendedor?*

El concepto de emprendimiento ha evolucionado más allá de la idea tradicional de iniciar un negocio. En la actualidad, se entiende como la capacidad de identificar



oportunidades, resolver problemas con creatividad y enfrentar retos con determinación. En un escenario global donde la tecnología y los avances sociales transforman las profesiones tradicionales, cultivar esta mentalidad en las nuevas generaciones es esencial.

Un niño o joven con habilidades emprendedoras está mejor equipado para adaptarse a los cambios del mercado laboral y desarrollar soluciones innovadoras que impacten positivamente a su entorno. Esto incluye competencias clave como el pensamiento crítico, la toma de decisiones estratégicas y la capacidad de innovar, cualidades que cada vez son más demandadas en todos los sectores.

El liderazgo como herramienta para transformar vidas

Por otro lado, el liderazgo es mucho más que dirigir; es la capacidad de inspirar, influir positivamente y trabajar en equipo para alcanzar metas comunes. Desde temprana edad, fomentar el liderazgo en los niños y jóvenes les ayuda a internalizar valores fundamentales como la empatía, la responsabilidad y la comunicación efectiva.

Un buen líder no siempre está al frente; muchas veces es quien escucha, colabora y promueve soluciones inclusivas. Esta habilidad no solo les beneficia a nivel profesional, sino que también les convierte en miembros activos y solidarios de su comunidad.

# Beneficios tangibles de aprender a emprender y liderar

Incorporar la formación en emprendimiento y liderazgo desde la infancia trae consigo múltiples beneficios, entre ellos:

## **Creatividad e innovación:**

La capacidad de generar ideas originales y enfrentar desafíos con soluciones únicas.

## **Confianza y autonomía:**

Aprenden a creer en sí mismos y a enfrentar los retos con seguridad.

## **Resolución de conflictos:**

Desarrollan habilidades para mediar y buscar acuerdos efectivos.

## **Conciencia social:**

Adoptan un compromiso con su entorno, buscando maneras de contribuir positivamente.

## **Preparación para el mercado laboral:**

Desarrollan competencias como adaptabilidad, trabajo en equipo y comunicación, que son altamente valoradas en la actualidad.



# Estrategias para fomentar estas habilidades

Existen diversas formas de integrar estas competencias en la educación de niños y jóvenes:

## **Proyectos escolares y extracurriculares:**

Actividades como ferias de ideas, concursos de emprendimiento o proyectos en equipo que promuevan la creatividad y el liderazgo.

## **Talleres y programas especializados:**

Iniciativas fuera del aula enfocadas en liderazgo, pensamiento crítico y resolución de problemas.

## **Modelos a seguir:**

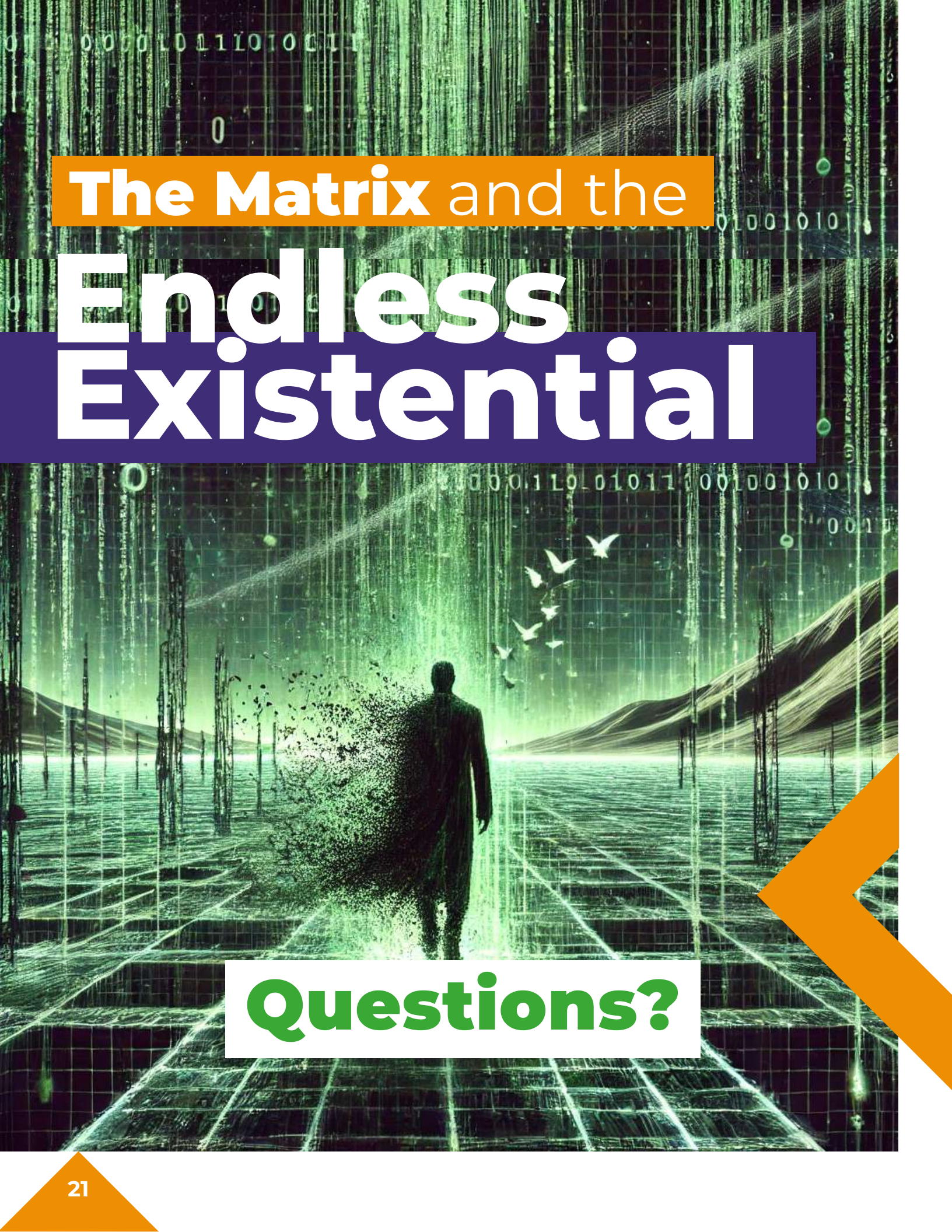
Padres, profesores y mentores que demuestren con su ejemplo cómo enfrentar desafíos y liderar con integridad.

## **Participación activa:**

Darles a los estudiantes la oportunidad de liderar iniciativas, tomar decisiones y trabajar colaborativamente.  
Una apuesta por el futuro

Fomentar el emprendimiento y el liderazgo no solo es una preparación para un entorno laboral cambiante, sino también una inversión en la construcción de una sociedad más innovadora, solidaria y comprometida. Estas habilidades no solo definen carreras exitosas, sino también vidas plenas y con propósito.

Al formar niños y jóvenes capaces de liderar e innovar, estamos sembrando las bases de un futuro donde los retos serán oportunidades y las ideas transformarán el mundo. Una generación con estas herramientas está lista para construir un mañana mejor, un paso a la vez.



**The Matrix** and the

# Endless Existential

**Questions?**



**Young Monk:** “Do not try and bend the spoon—that’s impossible. Instead, only try to realize the truth.”

**Neo:** “What truth?”

**Young Monk:** “There is no spoon.”

We can all agree that an existential crisis isn’t the best feeling. Either something can trigger it, or it just comes without warning. Also, if you’re wondering what an existential crisis is, this article isn’t for you, and you may want to keep scrolling—this isn’t your cup of tea. As I was saying, it just comes naturally then I tell myself: “Ah! It’s time to revisit The Matrix.” Spoiler alert: The Matrix won’t help you overcome your existential crisis. On the contrary, it will leave you not only questioning your very own existence but also existence itself—I call that deflecting into a higher purpose for humanity, haha.

What is The Matrix, though? That question runs through the entire movie, but for those who haven’t watched it yet, The Matrix is a 1999 film that revolutionised the film industry. Not just because of the cool effects, music, and topic, but also because it came out at the end of the 20th century, when mobile phones were not yet a thing for the average person, there wasn’t a lot of techno-

logical development, and, hey, Facebook hadn’t even been invented yet. Besides, it encompassed the whole terror surrounding computers resetting because of the Y2K bug—people were throwing around the term without really knowing what it meant or what the actual risk was. Do your research, by the way! The Matrix was a bomb dropped right in the middle of all that—not only portraying a dark future where humanity is submissive to AI, but also dipping into philosophical questions that still echo through popular culture today. I mean, where do you think the phrase “red pill” comes from?

Going back to my movie of choice to cope with my existential crisis, let’s try and explain the whys and the what?! I always watch it (though I haven’t been totally honest—Fight Club is another go-to for my existential crises, but let’s just focus on The Matrix this time). I don’t know what other people’s existential crises look like; I have no idea what they go through. I think we all want to be left alone, ruminating on these things, but for me, I feel very uneasy. I’m hyper-aware of everything, and it becomes overwhelming, full of “what ifs.” It usually starts with thoughts about my childhood and what I’ve accomplished so far (this is the beginning), and then it starts to build. “Am I living life to the fullest? Am I missing something? Is this the life I’m supposed to live?” And then, the dreaded “what ifs” begin: “What if some-



thing tiny I did, changed my destiny forever” From there, the questions flow like racing thoughts, one after the other. “Why did I make x decision? What would have happened if I hadn’t?” (I love conditionals!) It goes on and on, and then the hopelessness arrives. “What’s the meaning of life? Why am I like this? Am I normal? What is normal anyway?”

My father always says that existential crises happen to people with too much time on their hands.

**I disagree with him for two main reasons:**

1. Kids have existential crises, and kids play outside with other kids, go to school—there’s no time to think (kids as in 80s kids).

2. He also has existential crises. I even know when his are going to hit, but he refuses to accept that, despite all the stories he’s told me about being overwhelmed while looking at the night sky, full of stars in the middle of nowhere, wondering about infinity. (See, we all have different focuses in our crises, but it’s the same feeling at the core—whether you’re contemplating the vastness of the universe or asking what your purpose in life is, it’s the realisation that there’s something much bigger than yourself, and that can be terrifying.) Anything can trigger it—or worse, just finding a random dead pigeon while walking on the street, staring at a dead pigeon and thinking, “Oh God, this is how we all end.”

The first time I watched The Matrix, I was weirder than I am now. I had just started

university—new people, new things, and a lot to process. When I finished watching the movie, I was speechless. “Mind-blowing. This is it, this-is-it. I am worse now, great!” It was pretty intense back then, though not so much anymore. I started to see the correlations. We have glitches: every time we experience a déjà vu or when we go somewhere for the first time, and somehow it feels familiar. Or people—people you’ve just met and hate for no reason! “What if we’re inside ‘The Matrix’ already?” The thought sent me from uneasiness to horror and then to a panic attack.

There are three more movies, but those don’t carry the philosophical weight the first one does. I “felt” the movie, I’m not kidding. I felt claustrophobic most of the time—espe-

cially in one scene where Morpheus asks if Neo thinks they’re really breathing oxygen. Or when he asks, ‘What is real? How you define real?’ Neo has a panic attack because he cannot watching The Matrix makes it worse for us people with existential crises—it only adds more unsolvable questions to the pile.

In the end, watching The Matrix doesn’t answer my existential questions—it only adds to them. But maybe that’s the point. The movie doesn’t give us neat solutions or easy truths; instead, it forces us to confront the uncertainty, to question our reality, and to accept that some things might never be fully known. Whether we choose the red pill or the blue pill, the questions remain. And perhaps, in asking them, we find a little more clarity, even if the answers elude us.



**By Ms. Diamela Acosta.**



English

Etienne Lassure Tirado

Identity and  
Tragedy in

# “The Birthday of the Infanta”

:Perspectives.



By: Etienne Lassure Tirado.

"...A veces en las tardes una cara nos mira desde el fondo de un espejo; El arte debe ser como ese espejo Que nos revela nuestra propia cara..." (Borges). Have you ever asked yourself how others perceive you? From this question, countless assumptions may arise, shaping what we call our "meta perspective"—the perspective we believe others hold about us. "Our meta perception, or the sense we hold of how others perceive us, profoundly shapes our self-image and social identity" (Gallagher, 719). In his poem "Arte Poética", Jorge Luis Borges suggests that art should function as a mirror, reflecting an honest vision of ourselves. Through art, Borges implies, we confront both our



self-perception and the often jarring realities of others' views—a reflection that challenges the alignment of our inner sense with the outer world. Similarly, Oscar Wilde's short story "The Birthday of the Infanta" explores topics like self-perception, societal prejudice, and the impact when someone becomes painfully aware of how others truly view them. The story begins with a joyful celebration in the royal palace, where a disfigured dwarf is brought in to entertain a young princess: The Infanta. The Infanta, innocent and unaware of The Dwarf's feelings, represents the shallow cruelty of a society that judges people by their appearance. Meanwhile, The Dwarf mistakes her

smiles for affection and experiences a deep emotional journey. However, when he realizes through his meta perspective—the perspective he believes the Infanta and others hold about him—that he is seen merely as a spectacle, his sense of self crumbles, ultimately leading to his death. Thus, Oscar Wilde's "The Birthday of the Infanta" reveals how the painful realization of others' true perceptions, combined with misunderstandings in self-perception and self-reflection, can lead to profound consequences, as the dissonance between one's self-image and outside perceptions that can either shatter or redefine their sense of identity.



In Oscar Wilde's "The Birthday of the Infanta", the contrasting behaviors of The Infanta and The Dwarf illustrate two different perspectives on the same situation, marking the beginning of a tragic journey shaped by misinterpretations in a person's metaperspective on social interactions. "When the little Dwarf hears that he is to dance a second time



before The Infanta at her express command, he feels an overwhelming sense of pride. He runs into the garden, kisses a white rose in ecstatic pleasure, and makes clumsy gestures of delight” (Wilde, 1452). These words reflect The Dwarf's clear misunderstanding of why The Infanta anticipates his performance. This misinterpretation sets the stage for the climax, when The Dwarf's viewpoint of reality collapses as he realizes how others have viewed him throughout his life, leading to his tragic downfall. In retrospect, The Infanta's innocence and naivety—typical of a child—heavily impact The Dwarf, setting the tragic events in motion. As a young princess, she sees him only as a funny figure meant to entertain her, completely unaware of his genuine feelings. Her laughter and encouragement lead him to believe she truly admires him—even to the point of thinking she loves him—filling him with pride and joy. However, his happiness crumbles when he catches sight of himself for the first time and discerns the truth: “The Infanta! It was a monster, the most grotesque monster he had ever beheld. Not properly shaped, as all other people were, but hunchbacked, and crooked-limbed, with huge lolling head and mane of black hair. The little Dwarf frowned, and the monster

frowned also...” (Wilde, 1458). Moments later, he understands how others, including The Infanta, truly see him—not as a person, but as a spectacle. The shock of this realization, combined with the collapse of his dreams, proves unbearable, leading to his tragic death. Subsequently, The Infanta remains indifferent to the pain she has caused, highlighting her sheltered innocence and her indifference to The Dwarf's suffering all this time.

Alongside the context of “The Birthday of the Infanta”, Wilde illustrates how The Dwarf's experience mirrors real-life situations where individuals struggle with their self-image and the perceptions of those around them, highlighting the profound impact of these misunderstandings on one's identity. Research shows the following: “nonverbal cues play a significant role in how we perceive others' emotions and intentions, contributing to our meta perspective. For instance, nonverbal communication, such as facial expressions and gestures, often conveys emotional meaning more powerfully than words, which can lead to misinterpretations in social contexts.” (Help-Guide). This distortion is evident in The Dwarf's misinterpretation of The Infanta's

laughter, believing it to be genuine affection rather than mockery, ultimately leading to his tragic end. Furthermore, the consequences of misunderstanding meta perspective can have significant psychological and emotional impacts, as well as long-term social and relational consequences. Psychologically, individuals often experience feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem when they perceive themselves negatively through the lens of others: For example; A student who believes that his peers think he is incompetent may disengage from class discussions, reflecting a feeling of inferiority. This dynamic resonates with The Dwarf, whose inability to comprehend The Infanta's true feelings contributes to his profound sense of isolation and despair. Emotionally, misunderstandings can result in intense feelings of betrayal or sadness: For instance; A person who feels betrayed by a friend due to a misinterpreted joke may withdraw from social interactions, fearing further rejection. In addition, long-term social consequences can be even more severe, leading to social

withdrawal and difficulty in forming relationships as individuals become cautious of future interactions. Moreover, another research indicates that "Individuals who frequently misinterpret social cues can struggle with social anxiety and fear of rejection, often resulting in a cycle of loneliness and emotional distress." (Kelley et al.). In the case of The Dwarf, his tragic fate reflects a profound disconnect from social acceptance and belonging, ultimately reinforcing the cycle of misunderstanding and emotional pain.

As a final point concerning "The Birthday of the Infanta", Wilde highlights how self-reflection can profoundly reshape one's metaperspective, ultimately influencing identity formation. Self-reflection enables individuals to discern the difference between their internal self-image and external perceptions, allowing them to confront how others truly see them. For The Dwarf, understanding The Infanta's insight forces him to confront the difference between his

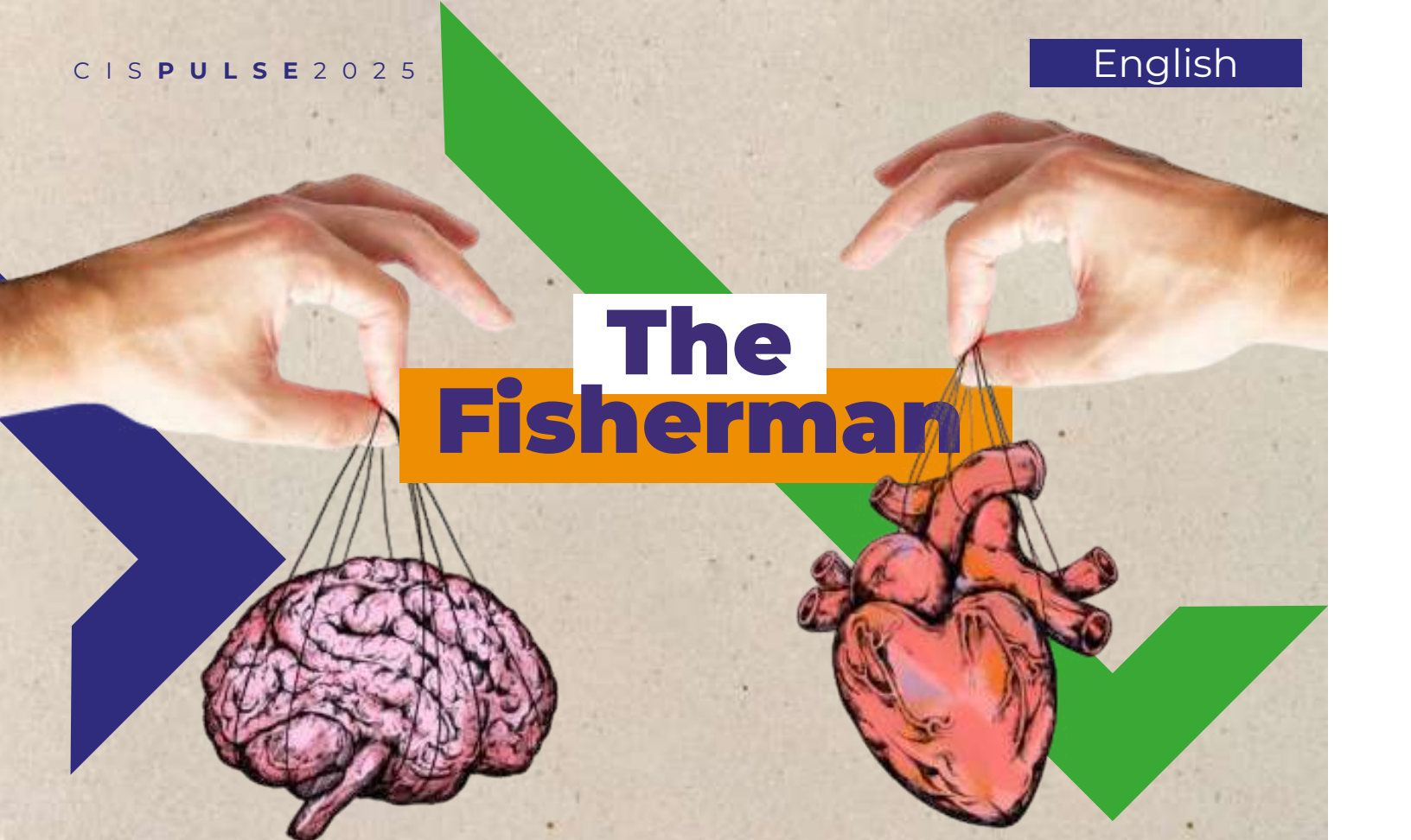


internal self-image and external reality, disrupting his sense of identity: "...He himself was the monster, and it was at him that all the children had been laughing, and the little Princess who he had thought loved him - she too had been merely mocking at his ugliness, and making merry over his twisted limbs..." (Wilde, 1459). This recognition emphasizes self-reflection's role in identity formation, as recognizing how others view us can either lead to self-acceptance or self-doubt. In life, reaching self-acceptance often requires support systems—friends or family who help remind us of our self-worth. However, The Dwarf's isolation prevents him from reaching this "final border" to self-love, leaving him defenseless against the harshness of others' views, including The Infanta's. Meanwhile, her reaction—"“For the future let those who come to play with me have no hearts,’..." (Wilde, 1460)—demonstrates her complete indifference to his suffering. Wilde thus illustrates that, without compassionate support, the dissonance between self-ima-

ge and external views can result in devastating consequences, as it did for The Dwarf.

Throughout Oscar Wilde's "The Birthday of the Infanta", the tragic journey of The Dwarf encapsulates how the realization of others' perceptions can alter, or even devastate, one's identity, especially when these perceptions clash with self-image. Each body paragraph examined this theme from distinct angles: The first analyzed the misunderstandings rooted in differing perspectives, while the second connected Wilde's tale to real-life struggles in self-image and social cues, emphasizing the psychological toll of such dissonance. Finally, the third paragraph highlighted the role of self-reflection in identity formation and how The Dwarf's isolation left him vulnerable to rejection and despair. Together, these perspectives illustrate Wilde's powerful commentary on the fragile nature of self-perception and the profound impact of external judgments on personal identity.



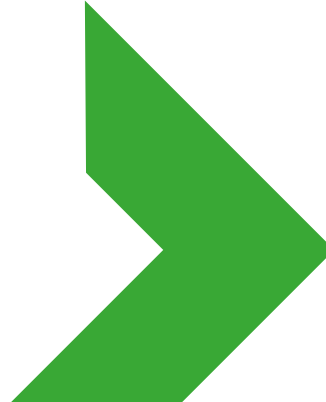
The background image shows two hands holding anatomical models. The left hand holds a brain, and the right hand holds a heart. A large blue checkmark is on the left, and a large green checkmark is on the right. The title 'The Fisherman' is centered over the hands.

# The Fisherman

## The Moral and the Christian Perspective of The Soul

“Hast thou forgotten that thou gavest me no heart? I trow not. And so trouble not thyself nor me, but be at peace, for there is no pain that thou shalt not give away, nor any pleasure that thou shalt not receive.” (Wilde, 1482). This quote from “The Fisherman and His Soul”, an Oscar Wilde's short story, approaches what could be an emotionless person, someone with no “heart”. It is often said that the human being is evil by nature

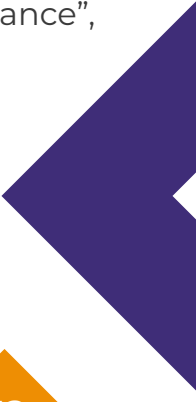
always following primal instincts, being tempted, just as the fisherman with the Mermaid's allure. Surely, Wilde was ahead of his time giving a perception of today's world society: inflict pain, receive pleasure. Wilde explores deeply aspects depicting the inherent behavior of the human soul and its conception in Christianity. In an era dominated by consumerism and social media, the human being is subject to accomplish his



carnal desires at the expense of the ethical and moral laws revealing a conflict against what was stated by the Christian soul.

Oscar Wilde's "The Fisherman and His Soul" presents a captivating narrative inspired topics such as: the ignorance, the morals and the evilness of the soul. The Fisherman was not aware of the deep connection between the human and the spirit and agrees to exchange his soul for the love of a seductive Mermaid. From this decision taken so lightly arises the corruption of the soul, making The Fisherman a thief and a murderer. In a world full up with sorrow, sadness and resentment there is no other option from the spirit but to learn evilness. Wilde explores the lines between the natural and supernatural realms, giving us characters that represent aspects of society. The innocent Fisherman with the mermaid makes a reference to humanity following the path of perfection, pleasure and love. The Soul represents the consciousness and The Priest is the figure of Christianity and its antiquated perception of love and morals.

The central axis of the story, however, goes around love. Love could be defined as something irrational willing to contradict logic and rational actions. Indeed, when it is based just on obsession and desire, there is no barrier to prevent, for instance, someone from losing his life earnings, getting isolated from society, forgetting basic needs, among others. Even though selflessness is necessary in almost any kind of relationship, it is essential to maintain a balance between personal desires and the demands of others. The result of lack of concern for decisions will ultimately be a profound breakdown of both the mind and body. Above all, the relationship between body and spirit, Fisherman and Soul, must be valued. The Fisherman asked the priest about the value of the soul and was told that it was irreplaceable, while the merchants said it was not worth a coin. Wilde suggests that the value of the soul depends entirely on the subject who observes. But what it is certainly true is that "the Body cannot live in a harmonious state without the balance of the Soul. When the Fisherman separates himself from his Soul, he can live with the Sea-Folk but '[is] incapable of experiencing sin and repentance'", (Kristen).





At the same time, and as a part of a criticism, Wilde uses the Character of the Priest to represent Christianity. The priest rebuffs the decision of The Fisherman to leave his soul because in Christianity the spirit is what separates humans from the rest of creatures on earth. In addition, The Priest rejects the love between The Fisherman and The Mermaid offering no actual explanation or spiritual counsel. Thus, Wilde suggests how the faith and loyalty to God was expressed in the Old Testament: blind and harshly. Consequences of blind faith have paradoxical effects in society. It has provided solace and a sense of purpose for countless individuals, fostering communities and

inspiring acts of charity and compassion. However, it has also been a source of division, intolerance, and conflict. Throughout history, blind faith has been used to justify wars, persecution, and the suppression of dissenting voices. Conversely with this perspective, there is also a representation of the New Testament and the end of the story. Yet the temperamental attitude of The Priest, he finally accepts the representation of love. Christianity means redemption and forgiveness for which clear differences in thinking within society must be accepted and understood. "All the things in God's world he blessed, and the people were filled with joy and wonder." (Wilde, 1487).

To summarize based on all the information given above, human beings are subject to temptation, desire and corruption of the soul if they are not subject to balancing emotions with conscience in society. In “The Fisherman and His Soul” it is given a perspective of the relation of love, spirit and religion. Humans have to be aware of the consequences of actions and the implying of sacrificing for someone. The spirit or consciousness, regarding the person itself, could be affected depending on decisions. The values of Christianity makes the subject reflect about forgiveness and mercy keeping the equilibrium of the “heart” or, failing that, just promoting a close-minded mentality in society. “The Fisherman and His Soul” serves as a reflection of making and thinking about possible life-long decisions and striving for a harmonious balance between our material and spiritual selves.



**By: Leonardo Guerra Olier**

#### WORKS CITED

- Wilde, Oscar. Complete Works of Oscar Wilde. Delphi Classics, 2013.
- Osborne-Bartucca, Kristen “The Happy Prince and Other tales “The Fisherman and His Soul” Summary and Analysis”. GradeSaver, 12 September 2018 Web. 1 November 2024.
- Rainsford, Sue. “The Fisherman and His Soul The Fisherman and His Soul,” LitCharts. Litcharts LLC, 14 Jan 2019. Web. 1 Nov 2024..



# The Star-Child And The Illusion of Superiority: How Vanity and Privilege Shape Social Hierarchies and Identity

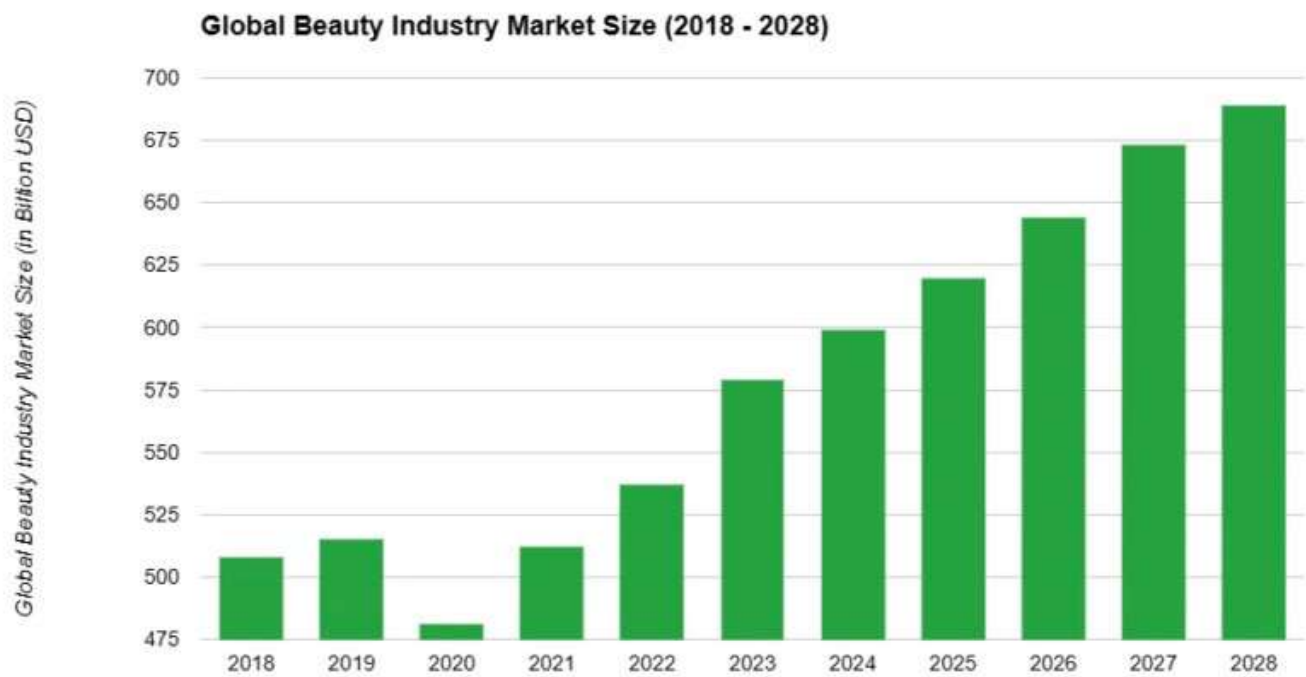
By: Mateo Velasquez Hernandez



“Surely I am a child of the stars, for they are fair and beautiful, and I too am fair and beautiful.” (Wilde, 1488). In this excerpt we can tell how the Star-Child reflects a belief in inherent superiority, which is based solely on appearance. In our current society, this compulsion with beauty is not only fictional. Take for instance the following example: according to EUROMONITOR INTERNATIONAL In 2023, the global beauty market was valued at over \$617.2 billion . This figure represents a significant portion of the overall global consumer spending, 2023), this shows how we, just as the Star-Child, asso-

ciate beauty with our worth placing high value on vanity and superficial standards. Thus, reinforcing the idea that vanity and inherited privilege —whether through beauty, race, or status — create an illusion of superiority that distorts authentic identity and reinforces social hierarchies, perpetuating inequality.

Vanity, shaped by societal emphasis on appearance, often becomes a marker of worth, leading individuals like the Star-Child to develop a sense of superiority that is inherently unstable due to the impermanence of external validation. First, vanity, defined by Oxford English Dictionary as: The quality of being personally vain; high opinion of oneself; self-conceit and desire for admiration, has been given, along with physical appearance, a high societal emphasis; this can be exemplified by how social structures and industries – such as fashion, movie, and social media– amplify this idea, making appearance a central aspect of our modern society, which has a constant pressure to conform to beauty standards, thus affecting many aspects of their life. Second, vanity leads to the look for external validation, which is merely ephemeral; nowadays, we can see people’s behavior highly shaped by social media influencers, as they show a perfect life based on superficial appearance, developing in “normal” people the desire to maintain appearance and social status, which is temporary, and never fully satisfied. This situation with social media leads to a third point: Relying on vanity, appearance, and status leads to an identity crisis. Again, it is possible to see how social media makes an impact on youth self-esteem, affecting people’s mental health; in such a manner, when people base their worth on transient



qualities, it leads to an unstable sense of self, notably when these superficial markers are challenged. To illustrate these three points that were just exposed, let us go back to Wilde's quote from the Star-Child: "Surely I am a child of the stars, for they are fair and beautiful, and I too am fair and beautiful." (Wilde, 1488). Once more, this bit mirrors society's propensity to place worth on appearance, consequently leading individuals to mix external beauty with personal value and status.

Furthermore, While vanity drives individuals to seek worth through appearance, privilege confers unearned advantages that reinforce superficial social hierarchies. First of all, race, wealth, and class grants unmerited privilege, creating the illusion of superiority; beauty, commonly shaped by societal biases, serves as a form of social capital; it has been said that attractive individuals are more likely to be favored in hiring, promotions, and social interactions. This 'beauty

privilege' reflects the Star-Child's belief that his physical enchant entitles him to dominance over others, amplifying his sense of superiority. In the same way, race and beauty standards fuse to marginalize those who lack "eurocentric" features, putting them outside the bounds of socially validated beauty. The Star-Child's disdain for others based on physical appearance mirrors society's tendency to diminish individuals who do not meet specific beauty ideals, reinforcing racial hierarchies and distorting self-worth. Lastly, class privilege works in the same way, with inherited wealth granting social status and access unavailable to others, thus strengthening the barriers of superiority. Moreover, both in Wilde's narrative and our modern world, these markers—beauty, race, and class—create superficial distinctions that uphold an imaginary hierarchy, perpetuating inequality and destroying authentic self-worth.

As the Star-Child's journey unfolds, Wilde



reveals that true redemption and self-acceptance are only possible through humility and authenticity, challenging the destructive effects of vanity and privilege; this redemption could also be possible in our modern society. In Wilde's book, *The Star-Child*, Initially consumed by vanity, places beauty and worth in the same level; consequently he isolates himself from others and dismisses their humanity. However, as he confronts his own failures and witnesses the suffering caused by his arrogance, he begins to recognize the void of his former identity, built solely on physical enchant and status. This reflects the consequence of prioritizing superficial markers of worth, where individuals, in pursuit of external validation, often experience internal discontent and instability. The *Star-Child's* ultimate transformation illustrates Wilde's message that genuine identity lies in compassion and humility, not in the imperma-

nent hierarchies created by beauty or privilege. In our society context, Wilde's story suggests that valuing appearance, wealth, or status corrupts meaningful human connection, breaking communities apart and reducing individuals to their most superficial qualities. Just as the *Star-Child's* arrogance leads to isolation and suffering, society's obsession on external markers of value fosters divisions, encouraging judgment rather than understanding. Yet, in the *Star-Child's* redemption, Wilde offers an allegory for a world in which individuals transcend these arbitrary standards. By embracing authenticity, humility, and empathy, both individuals and society as a whole can dismantle the superficial hierarchies that perpetuate inequality, creating a foundation for deeper, more genuine connections. On the whole, in *The Star-Child*, Wilde exposes how vanity and unearned privilege, rooted in beauty, race, and class, creates an

illusion of superiority that ultimately distorts authentic identity and upholds social hierarchies. Just like the Star-Child's belief that his looks determine his value, society's emphasis on impermanent attributes like beauty and prestige pushes people to look for approval from transient symbols of worth, resulting in a weak sense of self that is easily broken. Wilde's portrait of the Star-Child's arrogance, which results from hereditary privilege and external approval, is a criticism of these cultural obsessions that minimize people to their most basic characteristics and maintain divisions. But through the Star-Child's transformation, Wilde suggests that true redemption is found in compassion and humility rather than in social status or physical attractiveness. This allegory challenges us to see above surface-level differences, acknowledging that people, and society at large, can only overcome the false hierarchies that perpetuate inequality and create more meaningful, authentic human connections by embracing authenticity and empathy.



**By: Mateo Velasquez Hernandez**

#### **WORKS CITED**

*Wilde, Oscar. Complete Works of Oscar Wilde. Delphi Classics, 2013.*

**COSMOPROF.** "The Global Beauty Industry: The Markets to Monitor in the next Future."

<https://www.cosmoprof.com/en/media-room/news/the-global-beauty-industry-the-markets-to-monitor-in-the-next-future/>. Accessed 23 Oct. 2024.



# DIOS SHAMENOS "EL GUARDIAN DEL TIEMPO PERDIDO"

Este es un mundo paralelo al nuestro, una dimensión refleja, En lugar de seres vivos, el Reino de shamenos está lleno de momentos, recuerdos, y fragmentos de cosas que no fueron aprovechadas, olvidadas o simplemente pasadas por alto. Aquí, detenido en una especie de suspensión eterna. shamenos es el dios que dirige el reino de las cosas que se desvanecen, el tiempo perdido, los sueños rotos, los recuerdos olvidados y los espacios vacíos entre todo lo que existe. El es el dios del vacío que surge después de haber perdido el tiempo de ese tiempo que no regresa de ese lamento de no haber hecho las cosas que debimos hacer para nuestro mejor camino. Shamenos transforma lo que parece olvidado en una nueva posibilidad, tejiendo la energía del viento en sus dominios para crear oportunidades invisibles.

Este mundo es paralelo al nuestro, es como un reflejo al mirarte al espejo , no existen seres vivos, en el Reino de Shamenos solo

existen momentos, recuerdos, y cosas que no fueron aprovechadas, olvidadas o simplemente pasadas por alto. Es como estar, detenido en una especie de suspensión eterna.

# Sombras del Olvido:

Aunque no hay seres vivos en este mundo, a veces aparecen sombras que recorren las calles vacías y los paisajes desiertos. Estas sombras no tienen forma definida, pero se cree que son las representaciones de recuerdos, pensamientos o sueños que han sido olvidados por completo. Vagan sin rumbo, buscando fragmentos perdidos de sí mismos

El mundo de Shamenos es una vasta extensión que parece al mismo tiempo familiar y alienígena. Las ciudades y paisajes son como los de nuestro mundo, pero vacíos, llenos de ecos y sombras de lo que alguna vez pudo haber sido. Los edificios están a medio construir y las carreteras no llevan a ninguna parte.

## **Mito:**

La palabra "Shamenos" proviene de griego "chamenos" que significa "perdido", Shamenos nació del primer suspiro que el universo dio entre el comienzo y el fin del tiempo. Desde entonces, él habita en los márgenes de la realidad, allí donde las cosas se olvidan o nunca llegaron a ser. Se dice que algunos mortales que buscan redención por sus errores, que se sienten atrapados en sueños no cumplidos o que desean olvidar un pasado doloroso, pueden soñar con este reino o incluso entrar en él.



Aquellos que entran en el Reino de Shamenos deben estar preparados para enfrentarse a lo que han perdido o no han logrado, Shamenos no concede sus dones fácilmente; pide que los mortales primero comprendan el valor de lo perdido y lo no realizado antes de ofrecerles un segundo chance pues solo al vhacerlo podrán regresar con algo más valioso: una nueva oportunidad, una lección aprendida o una carga aliviada.

Shamenos puede observar tanto este reino como el nuestro, decidiendo cuándo permitir que alguien recupere un fragmento de tiempo o un sueño olvidado.



Este reino está lleno de vastos espacios vacíos, zonas desoladas que representan las brechas entre acciones, pensamientos y decisiones.

Pueden ser tan pequeños como los segundos entre las palabras o tan enormes como los años de indecisión. Los habitantes humanos que han visitado el reino a través de sueños o viajes espirituales dicen que caminar por estos espacios les produce una sensación de pérdida, pero también de potencial, como si algo más grande esperara ser encontrado.



## Mar Del Tiempo Perdido

Hay un mar vasto y oscuro en este reino, conocido como el Mar del Tiempo Perdido. Se dice que está formado por todas las horas, días y años que los humanos creen haber desperdiciado. Las olas están compuestas por momentos olvidados, y a veces, si uno escucha atentamente, se pueden oír fragmentos de conversaciones, risas lejanas o promesas rotas flotando en el mar. Shamenos puede extraer momentos de este mar y devolverlos a aquellos que han aprendido a valorar el tiempo.



# Eclipse de Amor

By: Yuris Margarita Castro Florez

El sol es fuerte y valiente, ilumina cada instante del día, abraza con cariño a todo el que lo pueda sentir y observar, su luz es esencial.

La luna es callada y fría no habla de amor, no le gusta el calor, la energía del sol la inquieta, la aturde, el sol habla muy fuerte y ella no está acostumbrada a tanta energía. Sabe que el sol la quiere con premura, dulzura y afán desmesurado porque quiere sentir su frío, se muere por percibir su olor.

El sol siente curiosidad por conocer el misterio que bien guarda la luna, quiere descifrar de qué está hecha, qué piensa del amor, por qué no permite que la amen ella no quiere una ilusión.

La luna no quiere saber de amor ella dice que la oscuridad vence la luz, que no es bueno el amor que no trae felicidad trae dolor, angustia, pesar y sufrimiento.

El sol insiste en dar luminosidad y contarle a luna sobre el amor, el amor que siente por ella, pero ella insiste en cambiar de tema, lo ignora, le propone al sol hablar de las gentes que ven transitar por los caminos que ellos iluminan cuando anochece y cuando amanece.

El sol conoce bien de amores y le cuenta historias a la luna de esos caminantes que observa cada día y le narra a la luna que esos caminantes han amado a plena luz y que sus rayos acarician las mejillas de los amantes diurnos que expresan su amor sin pena ni miedo, que sin temor muestran al mundo su romance.

La luna escucha detenidamente al sol y se llega a emocionar con las historias de amor que el sol cuenta, pero luego, recuerda que también ha visto llorar a los mismos amantes diurnos, pero en la oscuridad de la noche, lloran por culpa de un desamor.

La luna ha sido testigo de las promesas de amor que se hacen observando el infinito cielo estrellado y que ella ilumina a estos amantes nocturnos... pero, todo finaliza y alguien siempre termina con el corazón roto gracias al amor.

El sol apaga un poco su luminosidad, toma la mano de la luna y le dice susurrándole al oído: Luna, te amo tanto y tanto que prefiero seguir viéndote con los ojos de la amistad, no te hablaré más de amor, pero por favor no te vayas de mi vida. Luna, guardaré mis sentimientos en lo más recóndito de mi ser, no quiero separarme nunca de ti porque sería muy abrumador.

## Taza de café

Al rayar el alba y percibir el delicioso aroma del café recapacito y pienso, que al fin de cuentas la vida se vive y se disfruta sorbo a sorbo, que cada camino transitado te va enseñando a ser más fuerte, resiliente y que las experiencias te permiten recorrer los caminos de amor trazados por la caprichosa vida.

Cuando acerco a mi boca esa taza de café de orilla dorada, que tiene pintado a mano un bellissimo cardenal, una de las reliquias que mi maravillosa abuela trajo de sus repetidos viajes a Panamá y guarda con sigilo en su bífé. Llegan a mi mente muchos recuerdos de estos andares por la vida que se van convirtiendo en imágenes de una cinta cinematográfica, En el rodaje de esa película de ciencia ficción pasó de ser la protagonista, la doncella que espera por su caballero sentada pacientemente en la sala de su hogar a ser la villana de la película, la doncella en cautiverio, custodiada por un horrible dragón que no le permite ser, no tiene permiso de hablar, reír o cantar, es un estorbo.

El primer sorbo de esa taza de café evoca la infancia en la casa de mis abuelos, el amor, el pechiche, las atenciones que con fervor recibí por parte de mis abuelos y progenitores. El segundo sorbo sabe a duda, la incertidumbre, al encontrarme en un mundo lleno de personajes que se apoderan de cada pedazo de mí, siento que desgarran mi cuerpo, que absorben mi luz, mi ilusión, mi alegría y se quedan con ella mientras quedo vacía, sola apagada. Todos se confortan con mis pedazos y recomponen sus vidas. El tercer sorbo, y el café se pone tibio, tiene un sabor a ausencia, a dolor, porque la persona con la que saboreaba y disfrutaba aquella

taza de café cada mañana, cada tarde, partió lejos de mí, ya no está en este mundo y con él se fue una gran parte de mi seguridad, mi tranquilidad, mi ganas de enfrentar el mundo, de mostrar mi fortaleza y esas sonrisas coloridas.

El cuarto sorbo, y se termina el café, tiene un sin sabor, un sabor a todo lo que amo y me hace feliz pero al mismo tiempo a nada, a silencio, ausencia y soledad.

Al llevar la taza de café a mis labios y beber el último sorbo siento, pienso y manifiesto que estoy lista para disfrutar una nueva taza de café, vivir nuevas experiencias llenas de ilusiones, nuevos amores, recorrer nuevos caminos que seguramente estarán llenos de amor, de conocimiento, nuevos personajes que llegan a mí para seguir pintado de colores cada instante.

Por lo que seguiré entregando todo sin esperar recibir nada a cambio y, si los personajes siguen necesitando pedazos de mi cuerpo, mi luz, mi alegría, mi sentimientos los seguiré entregando, me desprendo de mí y mis vestiduras con la certeza de que seguiré siempre prestay dispuesta a seguir disfrutando cada mañana y cada tarde aquella taza de café.





**Cartagena  
International  
School**