

Our Thirst.

By: Kosta Grammatas

He has tasted the waters of education. His body has sipped from the stale bottled water of conformity. They've strapped him to a desk in a classroom. A bottle of education hangs above him as it does for most students. Tubes filled with information feed them intravenously. It trickles into their veins and slowly travels to their brains. They have had no say as to what goes in. A soup of ready made curriculum drains into their compliant bodies.

As he struggles to remain conscious during his three hour educational feeding session a professor goes about his business, talking to no one who is listening. His glazed eyes roam the room, resting on the time-piece; Mecca for the eyes.

He snaps to attention; it is time. A prescription of homework is given, some take home education. The professor demands: Write this paper! Do this project! Show us that you know how to obey, come back and we will abuse you again. The internet provides instant answers and he goes back to not thinking. Alcohol provides soothing relief from the monotony. The desire to create comfortably stripped away with each long draw from the bottle.

Weeks of this; weeks of feedings and prescriptions for a semester. His brain, empty of experience, but full of information is bloated with facts. He knows not what they mean or what their use, context was never important in the classroom. Then it is time. He is bloated with information; it sits inside of him burning. He does not know where it came from or what it wants from him, but the final exams are here and with ease he pisses his education out. He pisses out his education and finally he can exhale knowing that his brain is free from that burden.

The professors—they've never asked him why he is here. They've never asked him what he has wanted to learn and what he plans on doing with his education afterward. He has asked for relevance, he has asked to trade out the bottle above him for one that suits his needs and goals better. He has suggested they ditch the intravenous education in exchange for a more independent line of study.

"Preposterous idea" they tell him as he stands quietly before his professors. "You are unable to learn without us. It takes a teacher to teach, it takes a student to learn. We have spent years in school ourselves and as you can see it has gotten us far in life. We have our well deserved tenure, great benefits, office space, and the power to mold your mind anyway we see fit. Independence does not promote learning; we have the PhD's to prove it." Anxiously they continue, "Go back to your desk and pay attention or we will lower your grade."

With great fear he runs and straps himself back into his desk, a grade is more important than any education will ever be, that's the way it has always been.

Casually he pretends to reconnect his IV. As he fumbles with the needle his bag of information jangles quietly against the others. The professor begins the lecture and as the classes' glazed eyes slowly make their way to the clock he secretly and silently reaches into his backpack and pulls out a book, a book of his own selection.

He is ready to learn.