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## *Theory and Other Dangerous Things*

- **Emory Douglas and the Art of Revolution** 7  
Mark J. Rainey
- **Translation Strategies for Japanese: Reconsidering Chesterman's Theory on Translation Strategies** 15  
Jeroen Bode
- **Conrad's Avatar: Group Membership and Authorial Intent** 22  
James A. Elwood

## *Teaching Tools & Techniques*

- **A Comparison of Electronic Dictionaries from Different Perspectives** 32  
Hideki Kambayashi & Markus Rude

## *Around the World*

- **My Travels in Korea** 38  
Yu Murata

## *Creative Writing*

- **Haiku and Senryū in the German Language** 40  
Masayasu Sakaguchi, Noriyuki Murata, Hew May Wong, Koh Takemoto, & Ayaka Sakamoto
- **Kirschblüten in Waka Poems** 42  
Yoshiro Takahashi
- **Colder than the Arctic Ice** 44  
Syarina Hassan
- **Son** 45  
Adam J. Lebowitz
- **Aurora** 46  
Laura Acosta

## *Reviews*

- ***Beyond Boundaries: Insights into Culture and Communication.*** 48  
Cecilia Ikeguchi & Kyoko Yashiro  
Reviewed by Samuel Nfor
- **Baruto no Gakuen** 49  
Deme Masanobu (Director)  
Reviewed by Manami Morikawa
- **The Edukators** 50  
Hans Weingartner (Director)  
Reviewed by Noriyuki Murata
- **Lola Rennt** 51  
Tom Tykwer (Director)  
Reviewed by Ai Kakunou

## Aurora

Laura Acosta

Nobody knows whom you said goodbye to as you slid your feet into your shoes and chattered your teeth under the anorak hood that kept you relatively safe from the violent cold wind that sought to slap you. The last traces of warmth evaporated from your cheeks, and you found yourself walking down a solitary curved road where withering swirls of green brushed your right arm. You don't remember this because you find it impractical to keep track of such trifles.

Once a girl had told you how she mourned the upcoming construction of a new building somewhere along that lane you now strolled on, for it wouldn't let her appreciate the splendor of the night sky.

"Yeah, but I don't come here to see the stars," you had replied then, rather coldly.

Had she been walking beside you that night, she would have stopped and looked up, amazed by the sight of a milliard blazing suns diminished by obscure matter, millions of light years away. She is the kind of person who tends to leave her bicycle abandoned in the middle of a rutted path to contemplate the afternoon light flowing through a pair of juxtaposed scarlet branches. But how could you be bothered about that, if her reason for joy is your very enemy!

She had looked at you decisively yet nonchalantly, exhaling a flock of words which had fluttered around your head like silver moths, batting their wings gently, looking for a place in your mind to land on. Yet your heart, that mad elephant on the run, had fallen into the ditch of doubt to respond with a bitter silence. This you have not forgotten.

Under the prickly breath of the unsuspected morning, a nimety of nuisances was surrounding you, wrapped in black velvet, and you wondered why the sound of their distant voices couldn't be choked by the constant reliable buzz of a neon sign. Your anorak kept you well protected from their judgment, making you oblivious of a steady gaze that all but reminded you of hers when she uttered the words you chose once and again to disregard. You may keep your head as low as you want, but the nightly embers will come back to haunt you, and so will the echo of her voice.

As soon as you reached home, your gaze slid through a crevice between the curtains. The horizon glistened in an orange hue, as if the silhouettes of buildings and trees were on fire. Right above, a fine turquoise icing devoured the stars one by one, slowly and exquisitely, as if a thief were hiding diamonds under the unpalatable frosting of an ethereal cake. Across the street, from another window, that girl was watching the same spectacle, following the steps that you may or may not have taken into the frosty twilight.

Perhaps you were glad now that the night was over, or perhaps in your slumber it went unnoticed. Who knows—the mind of a forlorn insomniac makes for all possible endings.

**About the author:** *Laura Acosta was miraculously teletransported from Colombia to Japan a couple of years ago. After regaining conscience she became a student at the University of Tsukuba.*

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