# The Bridge over the Sky Looked Blurry

Drake is a fucking retarded homosexual piece of shit. He has stupid fucking worn-out shitty ass jokes like “my name is jeff” and bobby shmurda random bullshit that nobody cares about and he should feel bad about himself and come to terms with how unbelievably retarded he truly is.

I waited for the four o’clock. It was when the sun started to dip from its 2 pm frenzy and when my grandma dutifully grabbed her wallet from the drawer and set off for the market.

Four o’clock was the time my mother would be teaching her chemistry class at a state high school twenty minutes away from our house and my father working at his office. For a brief moment when the sun dipped from its 3 pm pinnacle, something would happen and change the tempo of the day. I waited until my grandma was just out of sight, then, as if staging an elaborate prison break, I reached for the remote. I was nine years old and according to the constitution signed jointly by mom and dad towards nine-year-olds, TV was off-limits before 6 pm and only allowed for an hour a day. So rarely would I fixate on one channel for more than 10 seconds given the short time frame, but when I did, it was always playing Doraemon. For the next hour the room I inhabited would be transformed by the growing radiance of the TV screen. The show was about a cat-like humanoid, a socially-awkward fourth-grader, and a pink teleportation door that allowed them to be anywhere they wanted. It was as if God had dozed off after four finals and dropped one of his wish-fulfillment machines from heaven. If you were given three wishes, what would you wish for? As Doraemon pulled out a pink teleportation door that could transport one to any place he wanted, Nobita Nobi, the fourth grader in the show and I, the second grader who stole the remote control, both sat speechless in our own dimensions, transfixed. But our minds started floating around like balloons in the sky. Up and up they would go, like the Flying Dutchman blasting through the choked bay. Then they snapped.

The secretive TV operation came to a halt as the afternoon ticked away and grandma came back with her groceries. She was a devout Christian in a country without religion. She would spend an hour alone every night in her bedroom upstairs with her Bible. She turned the light off so she could feel the God “What would your three wishes be?” said God in a faraway godly voice. Amid inaudible mumbles sealed in her bedroom, grandma would recount all the wishes she’d collected in her basket: “savings, sons and daughters with good lives, grandpa stops snoring…” They were all fair wishes. But I knew from the top of my head that she didn’t include traveling with a pink teleportation door. Like ivy that grows into the surrounding, grandma had grown into our small town and became part of it. My parents didn’t make wishes.

Do you remember dreams so real that they leave their scents after you awake? I remember the dream of Doraemon and the fragrance of its promise. Of course, that promise would never materialize according to mom. W-O-U-L-D N-E-V-E-R H-A-P-P-E-N. Mom patted me gently as I lied sideway on the bed, pretending to fall asleep. “Those things are just cartoons. They are not real.” For most of the day, the pink teleportation door was closed and invisible. Only at certain times would it open, when three-dimensionality and two-dimensionality bridge. I knew the exact timing, when the sun was about to dip. Mom kissed me on the cheek, a kiss leaving a faint mark. I wiped it off.

During that time I thought I was the only person with the key on my hand and everybody else was oblivious of the fact that there was a world far beyond the confinement of our four quadrangle house. The Bridge between me and Nobita was as blurry as rainbow after the morning drizzle. Most people like grandma have no interest in cartoons. She squeezed her indifference firmly in her hand like the way she held her passion in god. She paged through her worn-out Bible like an antique collector in a junk yard, blowing off the dust that lay on top of pieces and scraps, while grandpa laughed and joked that grandma prayed with her head to the ground and butt to the air.

But then they started to fade away, grandma and grandpa and the house that had trouble holding on. Dad complained of leaking pipelines in the bathroom and the shower head that wouldn’t work. “They work well. I’ve been using them for years.” said grandma as she gazed away from the bathrook. Everything in the house smelled like old bamboo trees, the erhu that hung on the living room wall, the stool grandpa sat on when he played poker, the fish in the glass jar that always swam in a circle.

I was ten years old when we decided, almost overnight, that we would hit the road, go somewhere else, and leave everything behind. We promised that we would come back twice per year, once during Chinese New Year, and the other during Tomb Sweeping Day. But sometimes we only came back during the New Year. We left behind the old house and the memories in it, and rented a two-bedroom apartment in a crowded downtown district. Mom still taught high school chemistry, but now she had to take overtime. Dad had to drive two hours every day between his office and home, and I ate barbecue lambs at vendor stands with other kids and read comic books together, trading yu-gi-oh cards and struggling at school. I made friends because we all struggled at schoolwork and hated math. We became a band of young and insecure minds dressed up like Mario, tied up in the world where you wore backward caps and slam people in the face with a Pokémon ball. I found a home away from home and even further away from the leaky house I grew out of. I had my own bedroom and when it snowed in late December, it was like the only world I ever knew of. I sat alone in front of the humming desktop and a temperature difference of 20 degrees between me and the world outside the glass window. I heard the tree branches snap under the snow, and then another snap. I wondered if the channel still played Doraemon. I remember that there was one gadget called bamboo-copter that allows characters to fly wherever they want to. There weren’t many episodes that featured bamboo-copter but when there were I would stay by the televisions religiously waiting for that moment when Nobita Obi flew on his bamboo-copter, laughing as his house reduced into a dot. We didn’t fly away from our home, however. We packed old books, toys and lipsticks and the Toshiba computer, then waved one last time to grandpa and grandma and their sad old house. The snow drifted elegantly to the ground like a dancer rehearsing in her set. Mom was reading a magazine in her bedroom while dad snored beside her. The TV was still on and it was airing a Korean drama. Now all the TV channels were airing Korean dramas. I imagine the same drama being aired three hundred miles away down the highway, passing the field and winding its way to that little house where the shower head wouldn’t work. I wonder what grandma was doing.

“Let’s travel”, said the Doraemon to Nobita. They opened the pink teleportation door and walked through. Even when they passed the boundary of space and entered another world, they always came back at the end of the show. I used to think that I could travel far away and still end up home at the end of the day. The world behind that pink teleportation door was unknown to me and I had no clue where I wanted to end up in. “What was I really looking for when I switched on TV every afternoon at 4pm?” I found myself asking the same question after so many years. It was like a paper waiting to be turned into a doodle, into three wishes. Most people in China don’t believe in god and yet they still make wishes from time to time. There was magic in believing, because it could take on infinite outcomes. As I look back it was as if the waiting itself was appealing.

I decided that I would wait it out when I wiped away mom’s kiss, almost petulant. “I can fly anywhere I want” I swore in bed after mom left. I did, and it was not as fun as I thought. The world I imagined through the 4 pm gap was like the distant star shadowed by sun, its presence always at the back of my mind, like a seed hoping to become a tree, a vine, a flower, a grass. The destination remains uncertain, but it may as well be the best outcome.