

BY RIAH SMITH

ONE DAY, WHEN DRIVING TO SCHOOL ON A RAINY DAY WITH MY DAD, HE TOLD ME A STORY ABOUT HIS FRIEND WHO WAS BLIND. HIS FRIEND ASKED HIM;



(SIOL)

"WHY DOES THE RAIN STOP SUDDENLY EVERY COUPLE SECONDS?

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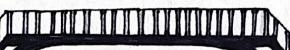
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AS THEY KEPT DRIVING, MY DAD REALIZED THAT THE SOUND STOPPED EVERY TIME THEY PASSED UNDER A BRIDGE. HE SAID TO HIS FRIEND;

"WHENEVER WE DRIVE UNDER A BRIDGE, THE RAIN IS BLOCKED FROM THE CAR." e, sa sebese Paere, resenvier ersastoe es abstr

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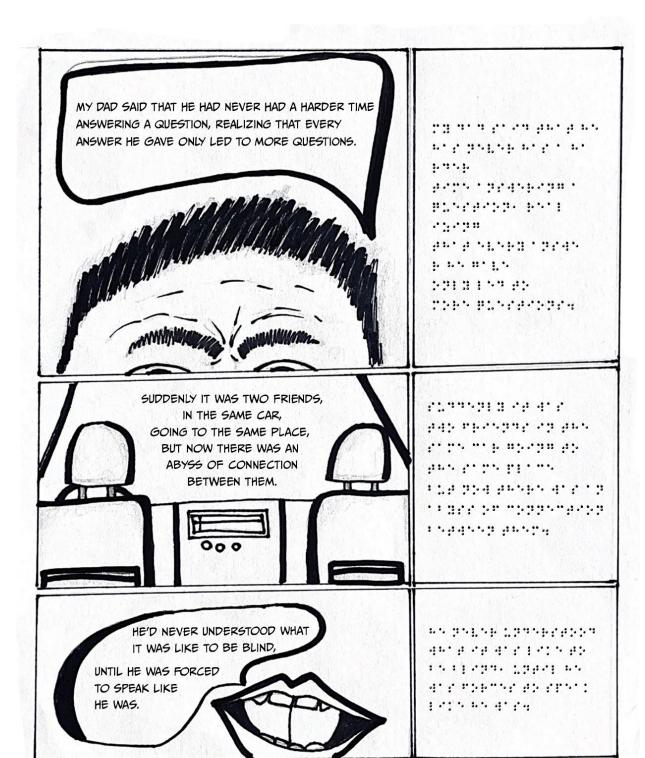
"WHAT'S A BRIDGE AND WHAT IS IT FOR?"



SAID HIS FRIEND.

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I HAD A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE WITH MY FRIEND AYESHIA.

I WOULD TOUCH HER ELBOW AND SAY HI EVERY TIME I SAW HER. SHE WOULD ALWAYS SAY HI WITH A

SMILE ON HER FACE. ONE DAY, NOT KNOWING WHAT TO SAY NEXT, I SAID "UH, I LIKE YOUR SHIRT!"

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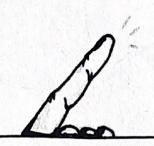
I FORGOT THAT SUPERFICIAL
AND OVERUSED COMPLIMENTS
ONLY WORK ON PEOPLE THAT
CAN SEE. I JUST COMPLIMENTED
A SHIRT THAT SHE HAS NEVER EVEN SEEN

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AYESHIA REPLIED
WITH A "THANK YOU!"
AND I WALKED AWAY,
FEELING EMBARRASSED
AND
MORE SURFACE-LEVEL
THAN I THOUGHT
I EVER COULD BE.



IF YOU ARE READING THIS

COMIC WITH YOUR FINGERS,

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT YOUR LIFE MAY BE
RICHER AND FULLER THAN MINE EVER WILL BE.

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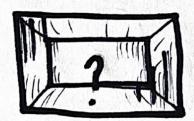
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IF YOU FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD AND PUSHED ASIDE,
I WANT YOU TO KNOW THIS WAS WRITTEN FOR YOU.
I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING IN MY VISUAL POWER
TO MAKE THIS COMIC FEEL LIKE WHAT YOUR
LIFE MAY BE LIKE. THIS COMIC IS FACELESS.
IT IS AMBIENT, AND HAS NO SURROUNDING
IMAGERY. NO PROFILES, NO COLORS, NO SCENERY.
IT EMPHASIZES THE SOUNDS, WORDS, AND
INFLECTIONS OF THE STORY.

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IF YOU ARE READING THIS COMIC WITH YOUR EYES, YOU WILL MOST LIKELY NEVER UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE BLIND. BUT I ENCOURAGE YOU TO PRESS INTO DIFFICULTY AND REALIZE HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIFE IS SURFACE LEVEL.

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DON'T LEAVE THIS COMIC VIEWING LIFE DIFFERENTLY.

DON'T EVEN VIEW LIFE AT ALL.

FEEL LIFE AND FEEL IT WHOLLY.

COMMUNICATE INTENTIONALLY,

AND SEEK TO UNDERSTAND OTHERS DEEPLY.

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NOT VIEWING LIFE DOESN'T MAKE US LACK ANYTHING. IT MAKES US MORE HUMAN. Dea beraepa bereta repa pri ribbe bert ripgarepa ea pri reibe prar koripa