



## The Luck of the Draw

by Mari Syrad

I have some questions.

Why do you think I'm worth your time just because my eyes are blue? I did nothing to earn the gifts that come from the cerulean sky beneath my lashes.

Why do you think I'm worth your respect just because my hair is pulled to the ground by gravity, straighter than your demographic?

Why do you think I have value inherent within my skin which is milk, is sclera, is bone? I am no kinder, no braver, no more worthy for my porcelain façade. It is just luck to be born white in a world crippled by racism.

I already know the answer, by the way, I just want to hear what vitriol you've convinced yourself is righteous. It usually starts with 'I'm not a racist, but...'

But you just keep spouting it and denying it and getting away with it. Through generations, through government, systemic permeations reach like the roots of an infinite rotten tree.

There are more questions, of course, the ones that are harder to ask.

Why did I wait so long to join the fight? Calling myself an ally without action, without paying attention to all the wrong and all the hurt in all the moments that they called for help.

Why did the collective volume of the world screaming its outrage so loud that the rows of riot shields quivered, for even the 'woke' among us to help amplify the shout for justice?

Why am I speaking and not listening even in this moment here, my shame being of minor discomfort compared to a whole life lived in danger of demolition, of education and liberty denied?

So now listen.

Hush until the voices that were drowned in the pale Atlantic and buried beneath a police officer's knee have risen to such heights, to such a roaring decibel that racism can no longer breathe for the thickness of revolution in the air.

So, I've borrowed your time and now I beg you to listen.

It's not too late to learn.

And as you learn,

Act.