Leaving Home

by Lorenzo Sewanan

He hears little except the light chirping of the birds, the dulled protest of cicadas, and the awakening of the grass as the sun rises. Opening the door with an experienced grasp of hand, he steps from the emptiness of his room to the quiet space of the home. No one is awake yet. He grabs his backpack, not much to take, and walks towards the back door.

Outside, he squints in the brightness; maybe it will be a hot day here, and his father surprises him once again. The man is standing there, a straight back and neck. As his father turns around, their eyes align. No words are spoken. The man removes a large gold ring with a black stone in the center and hands it to him; as he wears it, he notices that it is heavier than it looks with edges smoothed by the touch of time. He reaches forwards and hugs his father and listens to the man's heart.

After a few moments, he walks away. But then he stops after a few breaths to turn back and look at the man he might one day become. He hears no breaths.

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