

Segment 12: Twimfina Meets Baba

(an hour before dawn on a one-lane dirt road; Baba arrives at the sectarian border, gets off tricycle cart and sits on an old bench; a lantern hangs from the handlebars; crickets chirp; Baba looks at Twimfina's photo)

BABA

(pondering)

The person with the poison is the person with the cure...

(then sings)

TO THIS PERSON I SHOULD HATE
SHOW ME THAT IT'S NOT TOO LATE
GIVE ME REASON TO FORGIVE
GIVE ME PEACE SO I CAN LIVE



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TO THIS PERSON I SHOULD SPURN
SHOULD TURN BACK WITH NO CONCERN
STAY WITH ME, PLEASE STAY WITH ME
STAY WITH ME 'TIL I LEARN

I AM A MEAN, SELF-RIGHTEOUS IDEOLOGUE
I AM A BIGOT THROUGH AND THROUGH
I WANT TO FIND A WAY OUT FROM THIS FOG
BUT MY WAY OUT MUST BE YOU

TO THIS PERSON I SHOULD STOP
HAVE ARRESTED, CALL A COP
MIGHT YOU SOMEHOW BE MY CURE?
OR MORE PAIN I MUST ENDURE?

TO THIS PERSON I DON'T KNOW
SLAMMED THE DOOR SHUT LONG AGO
STAY WITH ME, PLEASE STAY WITH ME
STAY WITH ME 'TIL I GROW

I AM ASHAMED OF WHAT I'VE COME TO BE
I AM ASHAMED OF WHAT I DO
I WANT TO CHANGE FROM SUCH A HATE-FILLED ME
INTO SOMEONE MORE LIKE YOU

TO THIS PERSON I SHOULD FEAR
SHOULD REJECT AND NOT GO NEAR
PROVE TO ME THAT I AM WRONG
HELP ME LEARN TO GET ALONG

TO THIS PERSON I SHOULD TELL
"TURN AROUND, GO BACK TO HELL"
STAY WITH ME, PLEASE STAY WITH ME
STAY WITH ME 'TIL I'M WELL.

(As Baba continues to look at the photograph, Twimfina's whistling of "Stranger in the Ocean" can be heard approaching in the darkness)

TWIMFINA

Hello there!

BABA

A pleasant evening.

TWIMFINA

Yes it is! It really is a pleasant evening, isn't it? Why have you stopped here? Some kind of problem?

BABA

This is the border.

TWIMFINA

(chuckles)

Oh, you people and your borders! What kind of border is it this time?

BABA

A religious border.

TWIMFINA

(incantation-like)

"Border, border, much too long...
Now you're here... (claps her hands)
Now you're gone!"

There. Problem solved. You can go on across.

BABA

Twimfina.

TWIMFINA

Guru?

BABA

No, I'm Guru's father.

TWIMFINA

(grabs Baba's hand and shakes it enthusiastically)

Oh! I feel so lucky to finally meet you! Thanks for coming! Is Guru coming too?

BABA

No. Guru's at home. He has classes to teach later this morning.

TWIMFINA

(excited chuckle)

Oh of course! Oh, I can't believe I'm finally here! It's like a dream!

BABA

(remorsefully)

Twimfina, I'm afraid it is a dream. You see, we didn't tell you everything about us that we should have.

TWIMFINA

What didn't you tell me?

BABA

We had no idea that you'd actually come here...

TWIMFINA

(persistent)

What didn't you tell me?

BABA

My son, Guru, has some health problems. He was badly injured when he was 6 years old. He's paralyzed below the waist.

TWIMFINA

(confused)

I don't know what this means.

BABA

It means he has trouble getting around, even with a wheelchair. It means he has no control over his lower body.

TWIMFINA

I'm sorry. Why didn't Guru tell me this himself?

BABA

He was probably afraid of losing his pen pal.

TWIMFINA

(removing photograph from her pocket and handing it to Baba)

Is this Guru?

BABA

(slight chuckle)

Ah. I've been looking all over for this photo. Yes, this is my son – my dear son.

TWIMFINA

Is he a teacher in the schools?

BABA

He is indeed a teacher. But he can't get a job in the public schools because of his disability, so we've built our own little school at home.

TWIMFINA

Is he committed to teaching the poor?

BABA

(slight chuckle again)

Guru is poor. We both are. That's probably something else we didn't tell you. We manage to make a living by scavenging scrap metal and by doing odd welding jobs. Our home and the school are both in a scrap-yard. We're very poor, Twimfina.

TWIMFINA

(persistent)

But is he committed to teaching the poor?

BABA

Oh yes he is. Guru has long ago thrown his lot in with the poor.

TWIMFINA

(putting her backpack in the cart)

Well, that's good enough for me.

BABA

Please think this out carefully, Twimfina. You do have a choice. I'd be happy to take you back to the international border if that's what you choose.

TWIMFINA

(with a chuckle)

Too late. I got rid of that yesterday.

BABA

Are you sure about this, Twimfina? Life can be very hard in Ko-Lat Village.

TWIMFINA

But a hard life can be a happy life.

BABA

(chuckles)

Well, I don't know how much happiness you'll be able to bear, Twimfina. But if you want to give it a try, you're certainly welcome.

TWIMFINA

Thank you...

BABA

Baba

TWIMFINA

Thank you, Baba.

(Twimfina sits in the back of the tricycle cart as Baba briefly circles across the border then begins pedaling back to Ko-Lat Village. They briefly [45 sec] sing their thoughts [see "Twimfina - Baba Exit"])



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END OF SEGMENT 12