

**Gariel Matthias**  
**“The Bonded Hero”**

It took years for me to realise,  
years of living on these shores, and this little isle,  
that I wanted more;  
more of what I did not see, more of what I thought I need.

“But why mommy?”  
I asked for an iced coffee and got ginger tea.  
“Is Vincy we live darling, not Tennessee”.

I always imagined that by now things would be different and yes, they are.  
Tanty son have car, and every house has a degree,  
but that degree seldom develops the country.  
The cock must come home to roost they say,  
but by then the cock has learned to fly, and hangs among eagles in a first world country.  
All is not lost though, barrel must come,  
but does the development of this nation lie in a 12 × 12 drum?

Boom! Bap!  
A stifling, debilitating blow,  
but not the type of stifle our masked faces had gotten to know.  
A cloud of fury. A sky blackened with rage. `

A time when bathing with running water felt a little like flying first class on a plane.

An ironic clarity amidst a clouded mind.  
A new perspective in such a trying time.  
Not only thoughts of how things will be when we recover, but many years down the line.  
What is my vision for the country in which I plan to reside?

As a young scholar I dream of the day when others like myself wouldn't have to suffer to stay,  
Where daring to dream isn't a surrealist's nightmare.

And we all haven't accepted the simple fact that being underemployed is tokenism for patriotism, and the three digits missing, make you a hero irrespective of the life you're living.

My soon departure to a distant land is threatened with a bond?

These are amongst the things I struggle to understand.

On one hand Viva La Revolución Educacional, but on the other remuneration doesn't match up like two sides of the same coin.

My generation must take the lead. We cannot all be degreed.

Despite the idealistic view, sustenance has many sources and is not limited to a select few.

The economy is arrayed in a kaleidoscope of colours orange, green, and blue.

Those in between are my favourite hue.

Opportunities for youth development? Oh my! If not, who will make change?

We must plant the seeds and allow the rain of progress to irrigate.

There's so much talent and potential in our people, and so, my vision is of a place; where this potential is realised, and doesn't continue to exist bottled up and tucked away in a case, like Caribbean people and fancy wares, never to be used, only on display.