

Twice Bloomed
By Cara Wang

With the cool breeze that swept in, the leafy-green shoots of new growth had begun to peep out of the soil. Leafy-green shoots that signaled the start of a despicable season. Spring was a dreadful season to me - the thick, humid air wrangled its fingers into my curly hair, tangling it into a frizzy mess, and the birds' chirping was a constant ringing in my ears.

The monotonous work of sowing seeds, pulling weeds, and raising the young animals caused my soft, pale hands to turn calloused and rough - I couldn't ever understand the inexplicable reasons why my siblings and parents delighted in these endless chores.

But just a week after spring started, the rain halted. A drought loomed over our heads like an ominous cloud of dust in the distance, but I was overjoyed. I was free from my chores, the animals and their constant pestering, and the dreadful punishment of spring. And while my parents furrowed their brows in angst, I skipped around our wilting petunias and tulips, rejoicing in my newfound freedom. The heat spell had burned away the bonds that chained me to my chores.

But as a week passed, the uncharacteristically dry weather sowed seeds of desperation into my mother's wrinkled brow. The temperature seemed to rise with each passing day. A strange feeling consumed me. I grew tired of the lazy heat. The warm weather was no longer my savior or my companion. Now, when I played in our garden, the sun's relentless rays beat down on my skin, the once welcoming heat transforming into an unearthly villain. How I longed for the calming spring breeze I had once dreaded. How I longed to hear a bird chirp or a bee buzz instead of the unnerving silence of the heat. How I longed for the vivid reds and greens of flora instead of the brown and yellow hues of a bleached land. And... how I longed for spring?

Two days later, a much-awaited cool breeze brought with it the welcoming humid air of spring. With just a bit of encouragement from the rain, the land exploded in familiar colors as the birds and flowers reemerged. But the bird's chirps no longer sounded like squabbling toddlers - instead, the birdcalls seemed to intertwine into a pleasant choir. I gazed at our blossoming flowers - they no longer seemed like sporadic bursts of color. Instead, our plants were splashes of paint dotting the green canvas of nature. Wistfully, I watched the petal of a begonia flutter away in the wind. Like the plants that had sprouted, wilted a bit under the scorching sun, then blossomed into flowers, I, too, had been reborn. My previous self had faded away in the heat and grown into a girl who appreciated the wonders she once took for granted.