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## Dear America (American Dream)

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## Dear America (American Dream)

Luisa A. Igloria

*"...working men are the basis of all governments"- Abraham Lincoln, February 12, 1861*

And now? Now that we're told we have The Dream?

How do we make sure it doesn't deteriorate into a substandard or lapsed edition or, heaven forbid, a bootleg copy manufactured in a third world sweatshop of The Dream? And is this set of papers The Guarantee, to which we have affixed at the bottom of every page and on every margin of every page the semblance of a seal, i.e. our John Hancocks, our signatures in ink whose upswept tails testify to our consent to the terms and conditions set forth thereby? Have we observed the proper decorum, that heady mixture conjoined of nervousness concealed under uncertain pride?

Are we to believe your plumply jovial representatives, all pinstriped or suited up in black like undertakers?

Which they are in a manner of speaking since it is admittedly such a large undertaking to raise one's right hand and solemnly swear before The Book The Chair The One Holding the Gavel in The Chair The Alabaster One Whose Eyes are Shielded by a Blindfold O Most Cool Lady Whose Face Never Registers the Difficulty of Holding Up Those Scales...

Does The Dream we've been granted taste, smell, and handle like the ones our neighbors have?

Does each of us down our block and around the city have the same level plot to cultivate, make multiply, pull up by the bootstraps? What kinds of fences exist in The Dream and are there border guards who will check and check through our documents though we've surrendered them more than the minimum times required while others go on to pick up square after square of reward never once being sent back, tasered, choked, wrenched from the arms of, sent to jail or detention or disappeared or told to go back to Start-Do-Not-Pass-Go? And this, as you know, is history: our people making their way through fields and orchards shimmering like some kind of wet-with-dew or gold-with-sunset Dream, their hands bleeding the grass as they go; our children turning around and around in your funhouse mirror tunnels of The Dream lined with foil sheets and tinny music, running repeatedly into each other until one day The Dream makes them forget who they were.

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