

Third Place
We
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We

I am strolling through town.
Tip-tap. Tip-tap.
They. Them. Her. Him. Me.

The wise old man with a wrinkly forehead stops me.
I wonder what I did wrong.
I ask.
It's the pronouns.

Too often have we seen divisions between
us and
them.
You and I are not above them.

Tip-tap. Tip-tap.
Too often have we seen divisions between
communities, states, and countries.
We are not divided by gender, race, or religion.
We are grouped by humanity.

Each of us searches for inner content.
But to find peace within oneself,
there must be peace within the community.
There must be peace between communities.

We often speak of peace,
But few understand her as anything more than an ideal.
More than an ideal, Peace is a friend.
Peace does not mean you must singlehandedly create legislation.
Peace does not mean you must individually lift the burdens of the globe.

Peace is a smile, a friendly gesture, an apology, a way of life.
Peace is stronger than the mountains separating our towns.
Peace is wider than the desert stretching the West.
Peace is forgiving, celebrating, and beautiful.
But most of all, peace is liberating.

All peace asks for is a change in a small part every day.
And part by part we shall achieve a goal.
It's like connecting the puzzle pieces of humankind.
We once thought edges of our communities wouldn't fit.
But like the puzzle pieces of friendship and truth,
they did fit.
We did.

I am strolling through the town.
Tip-tap. Tip-tap.
Not them. Not me.
The wise old man does not stop me this time.
We.