

The Journey to Self-Mastery

1

"Our paths are not mapped. They're made."

—Priya Ardis

"It is important for all of us to appreciate where we come from and how that history has really shaped us in ways that we might not understand."

—Hon. Justice Sonia Sotomayor

Dr. Ruby

Over sixty-eight years ago, my grandmother took a taxi to visit a family member. On her way home, she left her belongings in the *trotro* (car). Extremely upset by this, she rushed to a nearby police station to report the loss of her things, and that's when my destiny was determined. After calming her down, an authority figure began to take the necessary information for tracking down the driver of the taxicab in an attempt to recover her valuables. The officer asked my grandmother to identify any plate numbers or written marks on the *trotro*. Unable to do this, she buried her face in her palms and began to sob. She wasn't able to identify alphabetical markings or words because in those times the social paradigm and resources did not create access for her to learn to read and write. It's so easy to recall the disappointment in her eyes as she recollects the story to me and her other grandchildren. Pausing in the same places and then

emphasizing the intended lesson for story, she ends with a heavy sigh, stating quietly, “From then on, I made a strong and lifetime commitment that all of my energy will be focused on ensuring that my offspring and descendants would be educated—not for life’s material gains, but for the sense of self-worth, pride, and independence that I couldn’t have.” The insight born from that moment framed a foundation for my mom, her siblings, and my entire existence.

I spent the first ten years of my life in Accra being told and fully believing that nothing was impossible for me, despite days that my mom would call me to her side and tell me she didn’t know where our next meal was coming from. I was precocious and widely known for my inquisitive nature as “*empaninsem*,” a term describing a child who ventures into adult topics. I was chastised for speaking of and about things that young children should not. With ideas and questions well beyond my tender years, I was shushed each time *why* left my lips. Clearly, it was not customary for a child to ask the kind of questions at the time, especially questions that stirred grown-ups, such as, why do some people have cultural scars while others don’t? How is it that some children go to sleep without food? Why were storybooks only a resource for a privileged few? Why does the whole country have to be put on curfew? Why did the police invade some homes, and why did they have to put M-16 guns on our heads when they came in? Why did protecting us mean they rummaged through our things and took from us? Why didn’t as many women as men drive cars? Why did my dad have to travel so far away from us to provide for us? Questions I posed to the adults in my circle had long, deep, social, and political implications for class, gender, and racial equity. Some were brushed aside with scolding words in response. Other questions were answered to appease me or in an attempt to temporarily close my questioning floodgate. Many, however, were left unanswered. That never deterred me from asking more. Despite being heavily rooted in cultural norms and perceptions that children should be seen and not heard, I believed the adults when they said my only limitations were my choice of the stars, the sun, or the moon itself. Nothing was impossible for me.

As an immigrant child from Ghana, transitioning to the United States was decentering. Everything about me, as determined by Western social values and standards, indicated that I shouldn’t be where I am. I was assessed to come from “a broken home” with a low socioeconomic status.

I felt disenfranchised in American schools, and I could not communicate effectively in this new language, a child who was criticized or teased in her attempts to learn English and assimilate into this new culture. I worked hard to learn English. Elementary school was riddled with classmates who teased me about the color of my skin and my hair, as well as my funny African accent. So I stayed quiet in class. The precocious child, full of questions about her world, retreated inward. My teachers never noticed nor stopped to ask me why I wasn't participating beyond when called upon. They never tried to deepen their understanding of me, my curiosities, views, or my intellectual abilities. They never bothered to look beyond the little Black African girl. My teachers failed to convince my father that I would do better in special education classes. As a matter of fact, the school tried to convince Dad within weeks after my enrollment that I'd be placed in a "special" study class to learn to read, despite the fact that I read perfectly. Dad vehemently rejected the attempt and demanded I be provisioned with more time to adjust and assimilate into the culture. Dad's rationale, in a letter to the school, noted that I was new and intimidated by the new classmates, culture, and learning environment. He asked the teachers to be patient and give me time to acclimate. He also explained my reluctance to engage and that shutting down in school was a result of the negative experiences I was having in the school. My classmates made fun of everything about me: I was being taunted as a monkey, African bush boogie, funny sounding, nappy-haired "midnight," and—because of the then-famine in Ethiopia—I was further tortured about my skinny body frame and also endured the label "hungry Ethiopian." Since my teachers didn't take the time to engage with me, how would they know why I was so quiet or how they could make learning come to life for me? My family became increasingly frustrated with the ways school interacted with the children in our family, and as one of my uncles brilliantly said, "They behave as if our broken English were an indication of broken brains." Despite the breakdown in home and school engagement with and about us, my family's advocacy, particularly my dad's, ensured that this smart, "un-shy" little star was never dimmed.

As I got into high school, the experiences didn't change much. I still encountered the same archetype of teachers and adults with low to no expectations of me doing anything more than occupying seats year in and out. It was uncommon and damn near rare to encounter ones that saw

me or something in me—that is, until I met my physics teacher in high school. He was one of those rare educators who saw my potential, didn't let go, and actually made me fall in love with science. He *expected* me to work hard, so I had no choice but to do that. But as quickly as this teacher ignited my dreams of becoming a chemical engineer, another educator extinguished them a couple of years later.

My second year in college, I enrolled in an advanced science class. I was one of only a few students of color. As the course got underway, I enthusiastically took advantage of the support sessions and asked a lot of questions. The teacher, after listening to my questions one day, paused and said in front of the class, "Maybe chemistry is not for everybody." That moment was defining for me. There was a rush of thoughts in my brain, toiling over whether that statement was privately meant for me. Perhaps the professor was communicating to me that I wasn't good enough, couldn't make it, or shouldn't be in that space, that class, that field. Filled with self-doubt, I made a plan to visit the chair of the department the next day. I arrived early, part angered and part ashamed, but fully ready to drop chemistry as a major. The chair made no attempt to reassure or persuade me to reconsider my decision to abandon the study of science. After responding to some perfunctory questions, I dropped chemistry as a major. I packed up my books and never touched a science book again. That school, that community, the world, would never know what I could've or would've contributed to the field and discipline. Not until I became an adult did I realize the impact that adults, particularly educators, had on my life.

The obstacles of trying to communicate effectively while still learning the language without being criticized or teased—compounded by social pressures of fitting into a new culture and the low expectations of many educators around me—stunted my learning process between the ages of eleven to twenty. I no longer saw myself, my value, or my song reflected in the fabric of American education.

For many students, especially students from historically underserved communities, these types of experiences are far too common. I hear far too many variations of the same story: of the feeling of not belonging, of families and communities not being included, of the constant attempt to fit in. And this is not just an immigrant experience. It is the experience of

many whose home language, socioeconomic situation, and cultures are different from the normalized mainstream, White, cultural standards by which success is measured and rewarded. These experiences, as well as others, left an indelible imprint that shaped my life's journey and choices as an advocate for children. I have made a lifelong commitment to creating the kind of school that rescues rather than loses Black and Brown children. This is why I became an educator.

Courtney

I was eleven when my grandmother first took me driving in her old 1983 Buick. In Mississippi in the late 1980s and 1990s, the legal driving age was fourteen with an adult, and by middle school, most kids, including my cousins, drove freely on back rural roads. I remember both the terror and excitement behind the wheel, while my grandmother sat in the passenger seat chain smoking and giving minimal instruction. After about thirty minutes driving around the roads of my mother's hometown, Centreville, Mississippi (population 1,300), my grandmother instructed me to pull up to a gas station so that I could fill up the tank. She disappeared into the service station, and I began pumping the gas. A boy in his early teens walked up to me. He said hello and began making small talk, asking if I was from town and how I was doing. I didn't make eye contact, mostly because I was extremely shy as a child and likely because I, too, was entering my teen years and had recently become much more aware of the way boys made my stomach flip. But also, and without any conscious awareness, it was because he was Black.

My grandmother came out of the service station as I was finishing pumping the gas, and I could see by the pace of her walk that something was wrong. "Courtney, get in the car. Now." I mumbled a soft "goodbye" to the boy and did as my grandmother instructed. Once both inside the car, me back in the passenger side, my grandmother began interrogating me with questions about my conversation with the boy at the gas pump. Eventually, we sat silent as she sped home, sighing heavily and shaking her head.

Back inside the house, my grandmother instructed me to stay in the kitchen while she took my mom and grandfather into the bedroom. I heard voices raise, my mom trying to calm her parents, but I didn't hear

a word they said. After five or ten minutes of yelling, they came out and went about their business. No one sat me down, explained what I had done wrong, or even what the fuss was about. But I knew enough to understand the variable present that day at the gas pump. I understood what element was unlike all my other encounters with kids my age, and without having to tell me, they taught me that day that there was something to be feared about Black boys.

But the truth is that this message was baked into my unconscious from the moment I was born, was in my DNA as a White person whose ancestors are rooted in the Deep South of this country going as far back as the 1750s. As a White woman, I have spent a lot of time unpacking my own fraught relationship with race and have worked to understand my relationship to my ancestors. The recent availability of digital documents has helped me to know more about the legacy, the men and women whose blood I share, who enslaved and sold humans from Abbeville, South Carolina, to McComb, Mississippi. But this knowledge has done little to unpack my own relationship with race.

I didn't grow up in the South. This was always my mother's plan—to find a way north, east, or west; it didn't matter, just away from the hanging moss and thick drawls that defined her childhood. She brought us "home" for one or two weeks each summer to visit aunts and uncles, cousins, and her parents. These trips became almost anthropological for me as a child, and the customs of the South became easy to name. For those weeks each summer, I knew to add "Miss" or "Mr." in front of adults' first names; to watch for big, coiled snakes while I explored the woods; and to expect to hear the N-word from adults' mouths. The first time I heard that word, my mom quickly pulled me aside and told me to never, ever, under any circumstances, repeat that word; she said it was nasty and not something we said in our house. Still, I never heard her give this feedback to her parents or my great-aunt Mary-George, who said it constantly. I cataloged the word with a short list of other words I was forbidden from saying but never made much note of it beyond that.

Many years later, my mother took me on a road trip through the markers of her childhood in her southern Mississippi hometown all the way to New Orleans. I was in my first year of college, just beginning to learn elements of my own hidden history from writers like Howard Zinn and

Alice Walker. It was almost as if my mother had been waiting for the invitation to tell her own story, kept locked up and silent from years of engrained socialization forbidding her from telling the truth. Across three days and hours of driving and shared meals, she told me about the summer her parents pulled her and her two sisters out of school only to return to a newly formed school in their church basement, Centreville Academy—a quickly thrown-together segregationist academy to thwart the federal enforcement of *Brown v. Board of Education*. She told me about the time, when as a young girl, she found a Halloween costume in the back of the family’s linen closet, proudly parading through the house until she came upon their maid and caretaker, who screamed and ran from the house. My mother had found my grandfather’s poorly hidden KKK uniform and believed it was a ghost costume her mother had sewn as an intended surprise. She told me what it meant for her, as a mother, to raise my brother and me away from the South, and she told me about the overt racism that was still on display in everyday interactions. And while much of the racism my mother observed had shape-shifted since she was a child, much of it was the same. When I returned from spring break to college, I began writing furiously, working to capture the stories my mother had shared. And while I wasn’t fully aware of it, there was something defiant in her storytelling, as if she was breaking some code by sharing what was never intended to be said out loud and ensuring that her lived experience was passed down through me. It was the last trip we took alone together. She was diagnosed with Stage IV lung cancer a few months later and passed away the following year.

Because racism has been “othered” for me—something that took root in the land of sweet tea and with evangelical Baptists—I never saw it in my own story. My father was successful throughout his life in climbing the corporate ladder. Every few years, he would receive a promotion, which came with a transfer, and propelled us to crisscross the country. I attended K–12 schools across four different states, eventually landing in the Pacific Northwest, and every few years, I watched my parents engage in a familiar routine: a family scouting trip to visit our new city, an exploration of surrounding suburbs (we never lived in a city where my father was assigned to work), and in-depth research about the schools. While I never heard my parents discussing the racial or socioeconomic demographics of our new prospective communities, somehow each move across my childhood

(seven in total) all followed the same striking pattern of White racial segregation. Every school looked the same: White students, White teachers, and a small handful (less than 3 percent on average) of faces that didn't mirror mine. Because of this, I can remember almost every name of the non-White students with whom I attended school.

One of those students, David, made me an epic mixed tape of my favorite bands, attached it to an anonymous love poem, and placed it in my mailbox during Christmas break of my freshman year of high school. It took nearly two weeks to get our mutual friend to confess the source of this incredible gesture. I responded with a note in his locker and from there began weeks of love notes and late-night phone calls. As one of only three of four Black students in the district, I knew of David long before I received his note. A few years my senior, David wore shoulder-length dreadlocks, a delicate hoop in his nose, and looked like a young Lenny Kravitz to me. He was an athlete and an incredible artist. He played my favorite Mazzy Star songs at parties and read books no one else my age knew existed. He was beautiful. And yet there was something about him that frightened me. In my diary from that year, I wrote about how taken I was by our correspondence and phone calls, but how I "could never be in his world." And even as our relationship escalated to secret meetups in the high school locker room or at parties, he is the only boy I ever dated that I never brought home or introduced to my parents. Before our relationship got too serious, I ended things and broke his heart. Without ever having to say it out loud, I knew that I would be breaking a silent code by letting things go any further. White segregation had implicitly taught me that there was zero value in engaging in relationships, romantic or otherwise, with anyone of a different race.

David and I lost touch for years and reconnected over email in our final years of college. My mother was nearing the end of her life, and I was surviving. I was completing my English degree at Lewis & Clark College, a small liberal arts school that mirrored the racial makeup of all my previous educational spaces. David and I began corresponding again, mostly platonic at first, catching up on the events of the past five to six years, processing the death of my mother, and sharing our dreams for life after college. As our correspondence continued, we picked up somehow where we'd left off years ago, and before long, we were engaged to be married.

When I told my father that I was engaged to David, the implicit messages around interracial relationships quickly became explicit. A few months before the wedding, he and his soon-to-be new wife sat me down for an intervention. He told me, “There is no way that two people of different races could ever have enough in common to sustain a life together.” His fiancé added, “Honestly, it would be worse than marrying a Jew.” At that moment, I knew that I was breaking a sacred code, and while I didn’t have any language, consciousness, or historical context for what it meant to violate White solidarity as a young, dysconscious White woman, I knew that there was little turning back. My father did end up attending the wedding and walking me down the aisle, but he and many of my family members stayed in a small room off the reception area, and in photos from the celebration, it looks as if they are quietly paying respects at a funeral.

As I write this, David and I have been married for over twenty years, and we have two beautiful children, eleven-year-old Eleanor and thirteen-year-old Henry. My father has only seen my kids a small handful of times, less and less throughout the years, with stretches of three or four years in between visits. Our own relationship has ebbed and flowed over the years with long periods of silence and periods of healthy connection. And both before and after I became a parent, I wrestled with my own reality that was impossible to erase: that pursuing a relationship with my father felt like a betrayal to my husband. Still, it was David who pushed me to continue reaching out, encouraging the kids to call Pop on holidays or birthdays, and as a middle-aged adult, I have worked hard to make sure he stayed connected to our lives through phone calls, texts, and frequent photos. And it was David who encouraged us to bite the bullet and buy tickets to Alabama earlier last year to bring the kids and visit my dad and his wife at their lake house. About a week before our trip, I sent my dad a text reminder with our travel dates and confirming the day we had selected to come out to the lake. After a few days of silence, he responded with a lengthy message telling me he didn’t “have any energy left for this relationship” and that he loves my children, but “it’s impossible to have a relationship with the kids when you have no relationship with their parents.” This is the legacy of race in my own life, the impact of three hundred years of ancestral racism and twenty-two years of seemingly benign White segregation. It has been the most destructive force in my life.

Entering into an interracial marriage didn't uncork my racial consciousness. While it gave me an intimate window into some of the lived experiences of a Black man, it did very little to unpack my own hidden and silent relationship with race in my own life. Neither did leaving my bubble of White segregation and moving to New York City to teach and eventually lead schools with all Black and Latinx students. The proximity to non-White people served as an illusion that I was doing the work of building an antiracist practice for far too long—the belief that, by simply being in proximity and in relationships with Black and Brown people, that I would undo my first twenty years of socialization. The reality was that my schema, formed most dominantly by White segregation, showed up in the books I chose to teach, how I assessed my students, and the policies I centered and enforced as a principal. It was only until I started to see myself as a racialized being that I began doing my own work to resee, reknow, and understand my own history with the White race. And as I continue to understand the legacy of my own ancestral trauma, especially the trauma inflicted on Black and Brown humanity at the hands of my own familial lineage, I cling tightly to my most sacred ancestor, my mother, and the courage she continues to give me to break with White solidarity and to say out loud what has remained insidiously silent for far too long.

Divergent Paths Merge in a Shared Purpose

Although our respective journeys—geographically, economically, and, most certainly, racially—could not be more different, our paths led us to have greater contributions in the power and liberation of humanity. Our personal experiences and racial socialization around education in this country were exclusively rooted in all things that upheld Whiteness as the standard and norm. Neither of us fully understood the role of this nefarious norm in our lives until we began a disciplined study of the role race has played in our respective journeys as children all the way through our career pathways. By swimming in the waters of race in this country, we both arrived at the same colorblind and technical conclusion: the bootstrap mentality that perpetuates the false notion that systemic racism plays no role in the racial paths we walk. For Ruby, it was the belief that if you focus, work hard, assimilate, exceed expectations, and pursue high academic goals, your race will not matter. It's the mythology behind the American Dream that has historically fueled immigrants'—particularly Black immigrants'—journeys from near and

far, the dream that makes each of us involuntary and unconscious accomplices in perpetuating Whiteness. This same myth serves to quell any curiosity in the mind of a White child who may question the advantages afforded to them because of their race. It also serves as a preamble to a cultural value that is hard to contest or counter. For Courtney, all the spaces she occupied, from church to school to the soccer field, were overwhelmingly White spaces. These spaces were exclusive and highly protected, and without ever needing to be told, she was able to easily internalize her place on the hierarchy. From these frames, our parents made decisions available to them that shaped the location of schools we attended, who we dated and married, considerations for majors, and even considerations for “honorable” career choices. Education was supposed to be an important equalizer, or even neutralizer, of racism. But without the critical approach to what and how children are being educated, education can easily serve to perpetuate many of the harms it seeks to undo.

Along this journey, we found a shared vehicle for change: education. The passion to fight for children is unyielding and purposeful. However, as early educators our own socialization in race permeated every aspect of our work. It influenced how we showed up in our expectations of students and colleagues, and in decisions we made around them as teachers and team leads. Implicit in these choices were biases, beliefs, values, and assumptions that we held about what our students, colleagues, and families needed and should do to mitigate any obstacles they might encounter on their respective paths of proving to be “exception” stories, capable of “pulling themselves by their own bootstraps,” and of being effective in playing a zero-sum game, of reductionism and individual gains. Our learned behaviors and attitudes ascribed a certain level of tolerance, readiness, urgency, and potential failure traps that rendered a limited “win–lose” binary status for those we taught and worked with that likely contributed to and perpetuated harm.

The opportunity to isolate and explore the role of race in our work as principals and beyond provided a window for us to unpack our respective “knapsacks,” exploring some of our own lived milestones—previously absent of racial meaning—through a lens of racial consciousness, curiosity, and humanity. This required us to explore the growing edge of our own tolerance for distress and discomfort, resisting the quick-fix solution

or response in exchange for a commitment to inquiry and exploration. This stance, bolstered by an unyielding commitment to exploring the role of race in both personal and professional settings, led to a reexamination of decisions and actions and their impact on staff, families, communities, and especially students of color. Throughout our careers as teachers, assistant principals, and principals, we participated in countless conversations focused on addressing students' underperformance and the academic "opportunity gap." In these meetings, we engaged in reviewing test scores, grades, and other data, as well as disaggregating and analyzing implications for teaching and advancing students' learning from frames with deficit, biased-based, colorblind references. We were forced to disrupt our own tendencies to pair technical solutions to heavily adaptive challenges. While self-examination became shared and seminal in both our lives and careers, it was a painful realization that our socialization and cultural beliefs were firmly rooted in a White supremacist framework and had so powerfully shaped both our personal and professional experiences and actions. The subtle and persistent ways we are socialized in race dramatically influence how we show up in our expectations of students and adults, in decisions we make, and in what we allow to persist in teaching, learning, and leading. Isolating and exploring the role of race provided us with a liberating window for understanding self, the work, and actions in schools. Without this lens, we will act and behave in ways that perpetuate low expectations for groups of students, staff, and communities.

Unfortunately, so few educators and adults on our journeys had these qualities. While we arrived at a shared understandings through our respective socialization, the impact landed very differently on us. In Ruby's case, a young Black immigrant girl's sense of self-worth diminished, value eroded and lost in the fabric of public education, while for Courtney, a young White girl moved through her world full of mirrors and daily affirmations that this world was made in her image and existed for her exclusive use. Every child, no matter the background, deserves transformative learning experiences that both affirm and challenge their understanding of the world. Giving this to each child requires reflective, effective, and culturally competent educators and leaders who have the capacity to create brave spaces for dismantling systems and structures that perpetuate inequitable outcomes for students. Our racial awareness

work started with ongoing commitment and practice holding ourselves and others in a sustained and often uncomfortable learning stance, resisting the desire to flex our leadership by providing solutions. This evolved into using our inquiry muscle to explore the unique role race has played in our lives and the lives of others. Courageously talking about race helped us increase our tolerance for discomfort, built awareness of our own racial identities, and created a path for examining deep-seated biases, fears, and mental models we brought with us every time we showed up. It allowed us to take responsibility for how these behaviors—shaped by White-centered beliefs, bias, and experiences—appeared in the schools we taught or led, especially around policies and practices we made or supported that may have unconsciously targeted specific groups of students. The explicit focus on race, and its intersectionality with other factors, is essential to understanding its impact on educational outcomes and in the lives (present and future) of students, their families, and communities.



Core Considerations

As school and district leaders, we noticed patterns that lived in the way we and other leaders we knew attempted to solve problems that were inherently more complex than how we approached them. We noted familiar landmarks in attempts to address issues of disparity, especially racial disparities, in access and performance data.

Patterns include these:

- Considerations/discussions for problems and strategies that center on race-neutral or colorblind strategies
- Strategies and solutions that are oversimplified and technical in nature, failing to deeply understand the causes and complexity of existing racial disparities
- A universal “for-all” approach to problem-solving that seeks to average the experience of young people, thus defaulting to the most privileged

Icon source: iStock.com/iSidhe

- An approach to implementation that rewards full-scale rollout without consideration or addressing key readiness issues of capacity, impact, or sustainability
- An approach that values and upholds the comfort of adults, replacing inquiry and strategy with checklist efforts, such as attending workshops or replacing books in a library

These insights and pitfalls have ultimately shaped our journeys in ways that set conditions for critical leadership needed to disrupt these patterns in order to confront and truly address inequities. And they've also served as a catalyst for exploring and understanding the conditions ultimately necessary to disrupt systemic racism from the inside-out in order to create transformational, sustainable, and truly equitable changes in public education.

The work of dismantling long-standing systems of oppression is akin to navigating a hurricane: As with an unpredictable storm, we aren't provided a road map for navigating all that comes our way in complex equity transformation work. And like the eye of a hurricane, it's easy to be tricked into thinking we have successfully weathered the storm or achieved our outcomes when, in reality, the storm is raging all around us, strong as ever. We humbly offer these pillars along with lessons learned from mistakes we've made, as well as successes we and other leaders have experienced, as part of the contributions for how we make our way through to a better, more just education system.

EXTENDED LEARNING



Independent Practice

We invite you to delve deeper as you reflect on your own origin story and its relationship to your leadership by making a commitment to these actions:

- Dive deeper into understanding the impact of racial socialization by exploring additional expert texts, including Corwin's *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools and Beyond* by Glenn E. Singleton (2022) and *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race* by Derald Wing Sue (2015).

Icon source: iStock.com/iSidhe

- Read additional racial autobiographies and reflect on ways that socialization played a role in these individuals' understanding of race in education.
- Use the personal reflection prompts to begin drafting your own racial autobiography.
 - How did you become aware of the concept of race? Describe the situation. What messages might you have internalized as a result of this?
 - How do (or have) those messages play out in your own beliefs and behaviors as a leader?



Collaborative Practice

1. Name some of the ways that Dr. Ruby and Courtney were socialized in race.
2. What are some of the messages they each internalized as a result of their racial socialization?
3. How did these messages impact their work as educators?
4. While most of their lived experiences were different, Dr. Ruby and Courtney arrived at many of the same biased-based conclusions early in their careers. What conditions might have contributed to these revelations? What insights or questions does that raise for you as you reflect on your own lived experiences and socialization?

Icon source: [iStock.com/iSidhe](https://www.iStock.com/iSidhe)

Do not copy, post, or distribute