

# WORLD BOOK:

## Some Thoughts on Entangled Metaphors



The air in the café's dim, secluded corner hung heavy with the scent of roasted beans, stale perfume, and old paper. Dust danced in a single, intrusive shaft of afternoon light. Four friends sat in alcove a wooden table sat with a battered globe— its blue oceans peeling and its brass axis tilted at a weary angle—acting as both an accidental centerpiece and that seemed like a unspoken provocation.

Liao ran a hand through his hair, his fingers working rhythmically as if trying to untangle some stubborn knots of thought. His eyes wandered over the globe's faded continents, then asked nonchalantly, "Isn't the world like a book in many ways? It is full of lost narratives and forgotten phrases?"

Nadya, whose fingers traced rhythmic, condensation-slicked circles around her ceramic mug, didn't look up. "If so," she replied, "then the binding must be immense to hold an infinite number of pages."

Gus adjusted his glasses, the corners of his mouth tightening with habitual skepticism. "People love to call anything they can't grasp 'infinite' just to avoid the work of measurement," he countered, his voice sharply cutting through the café's hum. "Usually, they aren't looking at infinity. They're just looking at something very large, yet also very finite."

Bill, who had been drumming his fingernails against the tabletop in a restless, staccato rhythm finally stopped as his patience ran dry. He leaned forward, eyes narrowing. "Whatever," he muttered. "My patience is finite. Why are we wasting our time deconstructing this doggerel?"

The globe spun lazily as a breeze slipped through the open window. On the wall behind them hung an abstract artwork titled "World Book," whose colors echoing the conversation's drifting metaphors.

Gus muttered under his breath, barely loud enough to be heard, "No doubt. This is a limp, lackluster line of chatter..."

Liao caught the jab, a serene, almost ancient smile spreading across his face. He leaned back, unfazed by the tension. "Relax, Gus," he said, his voice warm with amusement. "The universe isn't going to rewrite itself just because of our rambling remarks. Not even a single, stray syllable is going to shift."

The group fell into a thoughtful silence, each retreating into a quiet theater of their own minds, turning the invisible, unwritten pages of the chapters of their books.