

*The Life of Pi* is filled with meaningful quotes and tiny truths which can be applied to every-day lives. One such quote from the book is "If we, citizens, do not support our artists, then we sacrifice our imagination on the altar of crude reality and we end up believing in nothing and having worthless dreams" (Martel xi). This small quote, this grain of sand, contains an invaluable life lesson. Through this quote, Martel teaches the reader about the importance of imagination.

Martel do not tell the readers about what imagination will cause, but what the lack of imagination will cause. He states that the lack, "sacrifice" (Martel xi), of imagination in favor of reality will inhibit beliefs and result in meaningless aspirations. By this, Martel means that imagination must be maintained for humans to progress. This imagination is similar to that of required literary imagination. When reading literature, it is sometimes necessary to "suspend your disbelief." Otherwise, all enjoyment in reading the literature will fade.

Likewise, a certain factor of imagination must be displayed in religion. The scientific community has presented numerous findings that contradict or challenge religion. One must "suspend their disbelief" and have some degree of imagination if they are to believe a religion. This religious imagination is taken to an extreme in *Life of Pi*, when Pi subscribes to three different religions at the same time. That, however, only covers the "end up believing in nothing" (Martel xi) section of the quote.

The last part of the quote, "having worthless dreams" (Martel xi), addresses aspirations rather than beliefs. A translation of this section of the quote may read "a lack of imagination will result in poor hopes and aspirations." These poor aspirations and hopes will inhibit any form of true advancement. Aspirations, dreams, allow people to create a goal (no matter how unrealistic) and pursue that goal. It is a challenge against what science and people say can not be done. Without pushing the limits, the true capabilities of humanity and individuals may never be discovered.

All of this imagination, allowing belief and dreams, is most commonly cultivated by artists. The creators, and imaginers... the painters, writers, musicians, poets, drawers, and dreamers. Imagination allows for people to achieve and succeed. It allows people to worship whomever they want to worship. Therefore, "if we," humans, "do not support our artist," (Martel xi) then we set ourselves up for failure and boring lives, truly accomplishing and believing nothing.