

LIVING STONES

The Terra Mineralia in Freiberg exhibits thousands of mineral rocks, gemstones, and meteorites. It displays the earth's most precious items, from all continents of the earth—a giant collection of treasures. It is said to draw up to 700 visitors a day.

It's no wonder. I am standing in awe, simply gazing silently at the beauty that is before me, housed in glass compartments, every cut edge scintillating with light, each stone precious in its unique way. Colors of every shade delight—more pleasing to me are the amethysts, azurites and malachite. Ever since I was a kid, there was a fascination for gemstones, but the only exhibition I had seen so far was a smaller one in China last year.

It's hard not to be drawn to each piece, mesmerized by its beauty, frozen in time for awhile before moving on to the next one to examine how it captures the light and holds a ray of precious color in an entranced, crystallized moment.

Probably deepest in my thoughts is the realization at such beauty that is buried in this planet—what lies beneath...here, under layers and layers of earth, forming itself slowly over eons of time, and then one day, chiseled out of the rock which housed it and kept it warm beneath the earth's surface. I am glad that someone went to the depths of the earth to bring out its beauty and display it for our appreciation.

How like precious stones the earth's other inhabitants—people—are, too. Hiding every day in their own covers of rough stone, silently forming their individual lives, continually growing and taking shape...yet no one really notices the beauty until it is chiseled out, until some event happens to break a soul from its place of comfort; until nature works in a way that uproots a life and brings it into view of others.

Do we scintillate and shine after being cut and chiseled, after being thrashed by the elements of nature? Or do we choose to remain hidden until the right moment that is our time to show true value? Each takes their individual path—one cannot say which is more unique than the rest.

I look at these gemstones and know that even though their beauty fascinates and charms, and I am blessed to be standing in this hall, still there are other living-stones whose beauty must also be brought forth, and whose worth must be appreciated when the time is right...then, they too, will glow with an unearthly beauty—one that can only come from the darkest corners of a heart, when a life has been touched by Nature's precious elements, when these rare, treasured ones shine with the light that for now, quietly lies inside.

--Nyx Martinez