



For Thumper...and Jose Martí. A rabbit and a poet whose words are golden. “If you can’t say something nice, don’t say nothing at all.” Maybe that scene from *Bambi* oughta be looping online 24/7. And Martí’s *La Rosa Blanca*? Well, someone please embed this poem in my mind permanently.

Most of us put our thoughts out there, in verbal form or written; and the second we do, whether intentionally or not, we solicit someone else’s point of view. As we give we shall receive, no doubt about that. This is true especially online, where we feel obligated to reply simply because we have a keyboard. And fine, we’re all entitled to our opinions. The thing is, there is no respect for them. It seems it’s only safe to express them to those we know will share a similar sentiment. Or else, be ready to waive the right to invoke Thumper’s Rule my friend, because we know chances are we’re gonna get an ear-full and it probably won’t be pretty.

Today’s discourse, sadly, has descended to gutter-level expression. Although insults and put-downs have been used for ages, they are now on steroids in this era of social media. How incredibly unfortunate that we have forgotten the impact our words have. Or is it that we just don’t care? Frankly, I’m fed up with the disrespect, aren’t you? I feel we have lost the basic regard for others that most of us were taught as children. Like the kind of values instilled in Martí’s *La Rosa Blanca*: to cultivate love and forgiveness for friend and foe alike. I remember Mom reciting his words as I was growing up; their meaning so much more relevant now.

I know that biting our tongue is difficult, really I do, but I wish we would work harder at expressing our thoughts and opinions without the insults. Or, perhaps we should just zip it?

For every time You remind me, Lord, to practice Thumper’s Rule, and cultivate a “white rose,” I thank you.

What are you thankful for today?

-La Rosa Blanca-
Cultivo una rosa blanca
en julio como en enero
para el amigo sincero
que me da su mano franca.
Y para el cruel que me arranca
el corazón con que vivo,
cardo ni oruga cultivo:
cultivo la rosa blanca.
-Jose Martí

-The White Rose-
I cultivate a white rose
in July as in January
for the true friend
who offers me his loyal hand.
And for the cruel one who tears out
the heart with which I live,
I cultivate neither thistle nor thorn:
I cultivate a white rose.
-Jose Martí

"For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

-Matthew 12:34

"The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing in the right place, but to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment."

- Dorothy Nevill

"Words are like eggs dropped from great heights; you can no more call them back than ignore the mess they leave when they fall."

-Jodi Pucoult

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