

A Creation Untamed, Unknown, Yet Found



Serendipity

(n.) finding something beautiful without looking for it

Attention writers and artists! Those who want work submitted into this magazine can do so by giving it to Miss Ferraiuolo in Room 202 or by emailing it to

Anyone is still welcome to join!

****Please state if you want your work to be submitted anonymously.**

****If submitting poetry, state if you allow the format to be manipulated.**

THANK YOU to all the members of Serendipity who submitted fantastic poems, short stories, and artwork and who attended meetings and critiqued magazine submissions. A special thanks to those who worked tirelessly in creating such a wonderful book for everyone to enjoy.

Miss Ferraiuolo



WENDY SEOYEON KIM



LIZ GARCIA



ANTHONY VILLANELLA

Your Looks

Sebastian Zhao

Your black jeans may look like the night on you
But the light you give off from your smile makes it the day
You look so good during golden hour,
Looking like the brightest star in my sky
Making me smile when I'm with you,
Telling the gods I need you.



LILLY WATSON



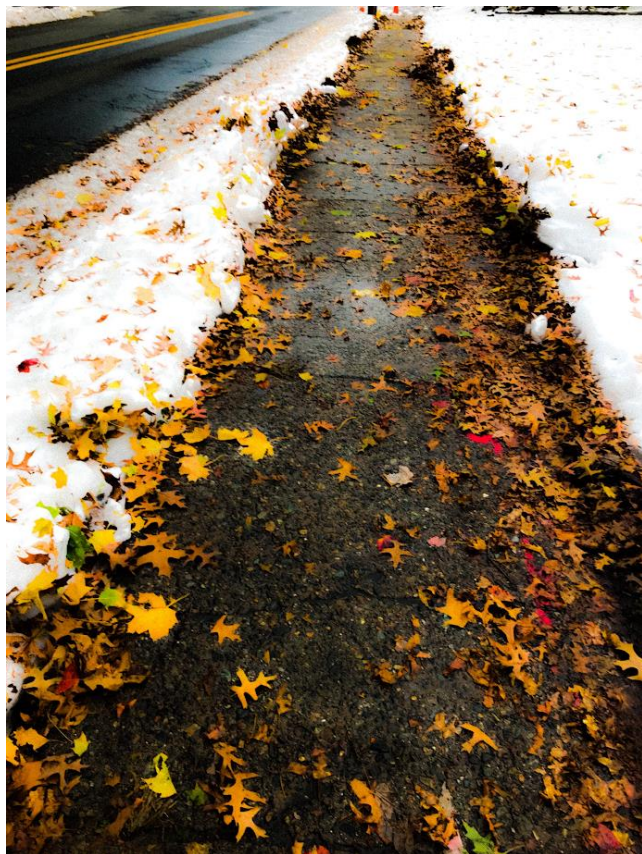
VÍCTOR SUAREZ



STEPHEN PARK



MADelyn SUAREZ



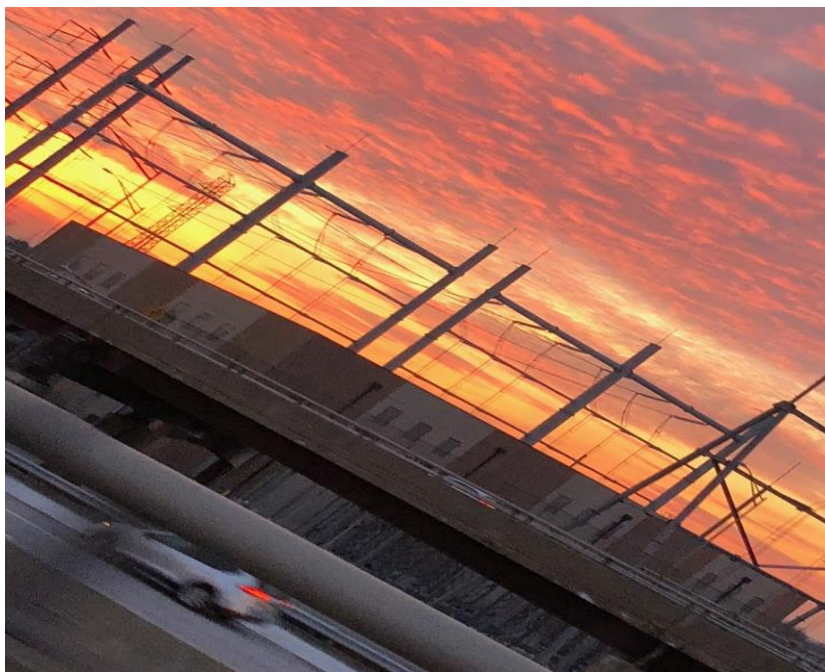
LIZ GARCIA



KELLY WANG



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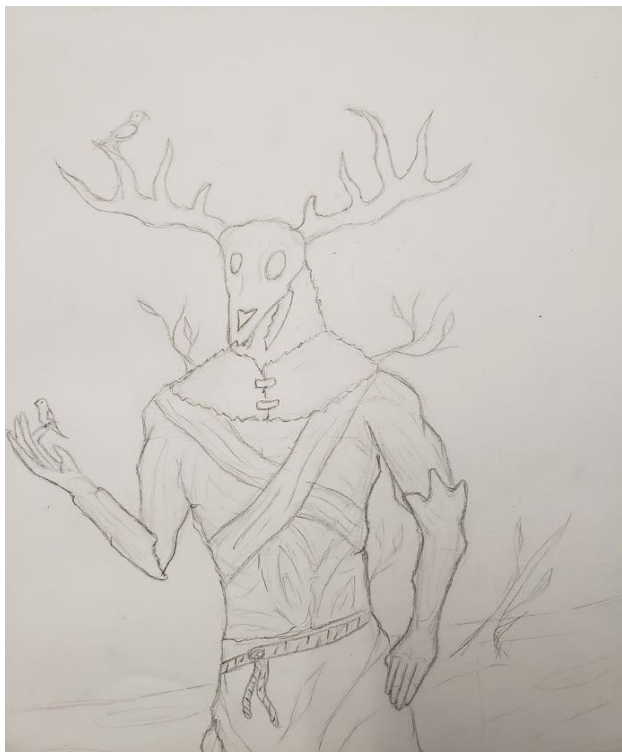


PANOS STAYRIDIS





VÍCTOR SUAREZ



MANNY OCAMPO



LIZ GARCIA



KELLY WANG

A Message to My Hero

Liz Garcia

A flower, a **rose**,
Something **beautiful**,
Something **strong**.
The warmth of mother **God**,
Bestowed upon **us**.

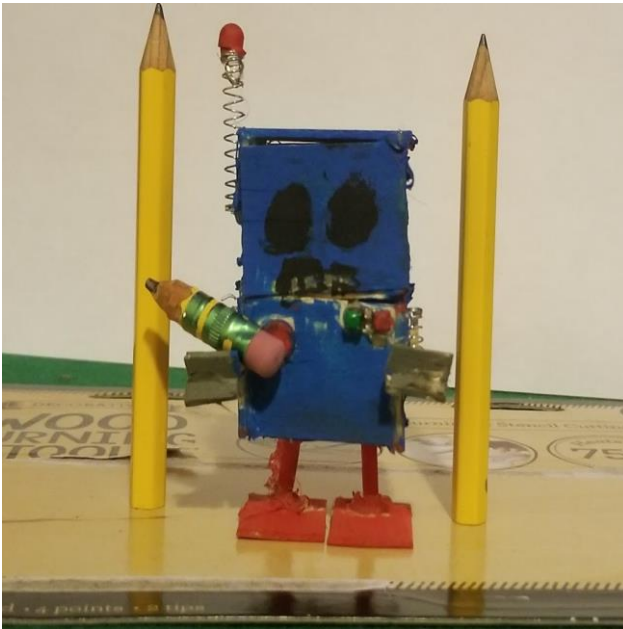
She is fresh, she is **happy**.
You do not know her **age**,
For when you see her **smiling**,
All you see is her impeccable **prudence**.

Love beyond **infinity**
Is all I have for you dear **mother**.
Your whole existence is my **destiny**,
And your precious health, my **purpose**.

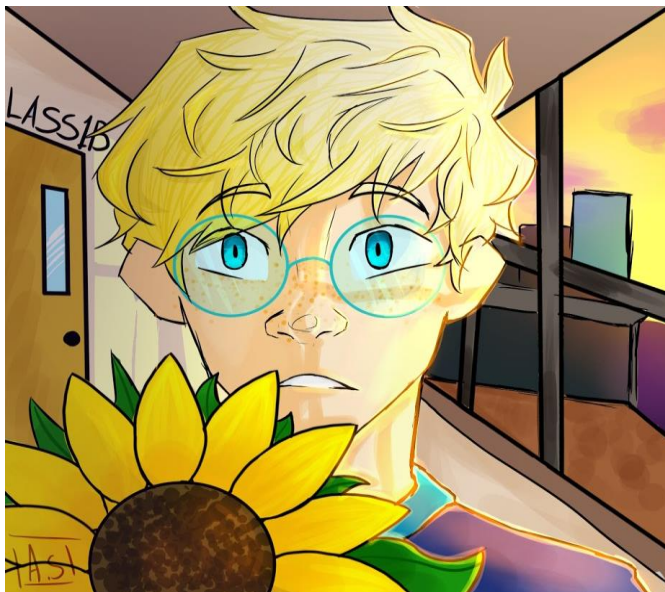
A warrior, a **rock**,
Something **beautiful**
Something **strong**.
I love you **mom**,
Con todo mi **corazón**.



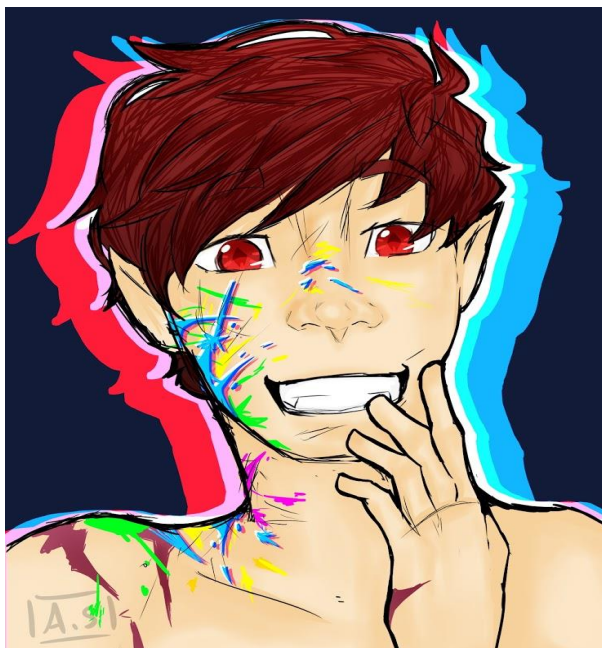
KAYLA SANTIAGO



VÍCTOR SUAREZ



ASHLEY SORTO





ASHLEY SORTO





ALRICA ANGELIQUE AVILA





ALRICA ANGELIQUE AVILA



IRENE SHIM

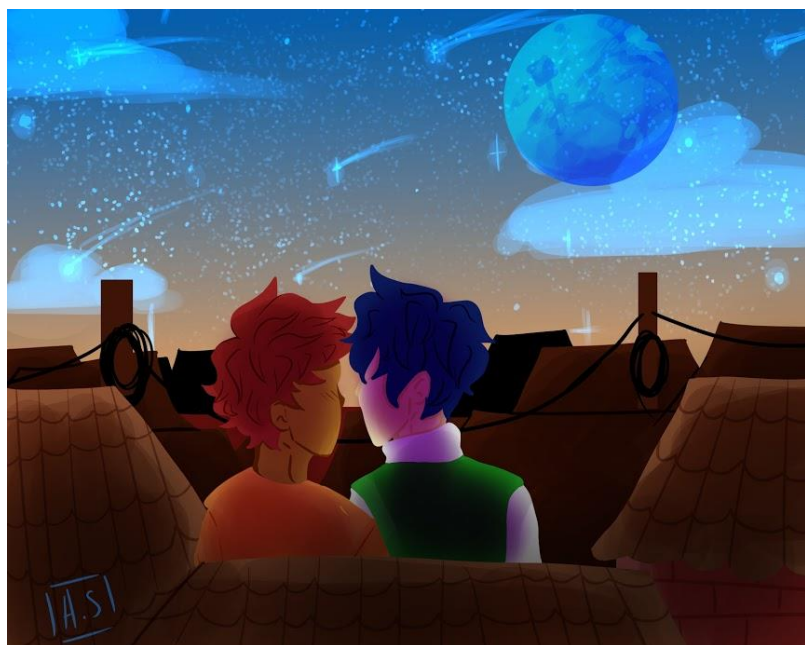


ASHLEY SORTO





**ALADA
BARREIRO**



ASHLEY SORTO



ANTHONY VILLANELLA

Easier Said Than Done

Kayla Santiago

We seem to take our smiles for granted
We forget about the laughs
When the tears pour down
We consume ourselves in the ache
Shutting down
It's easier than standing up and walking with your head held
high
We don't have to think about our tilted crown when we are
only worried about our painted frown
It's easier said than done
To be happy
seems impossible to a broken heart
And a tear stained face seems like hell
to a bright smile
Though no one can just get up with ease
Sometimes it takes others to fix your crown
Time equals healing
So don't man up
Don't let them say your emotions are connected to your
femininity
It's real
You're real
You matter
And you will get back that smile
That laugh is waiting for you somewhere down the road

Circling Worlds

Sebastian Zhao

○ Circle the world with your heart

Let your light shine through

Feel the darkness and wipe away the fear

Let your eyes glisten with joy

Circle the world with your warmth ○



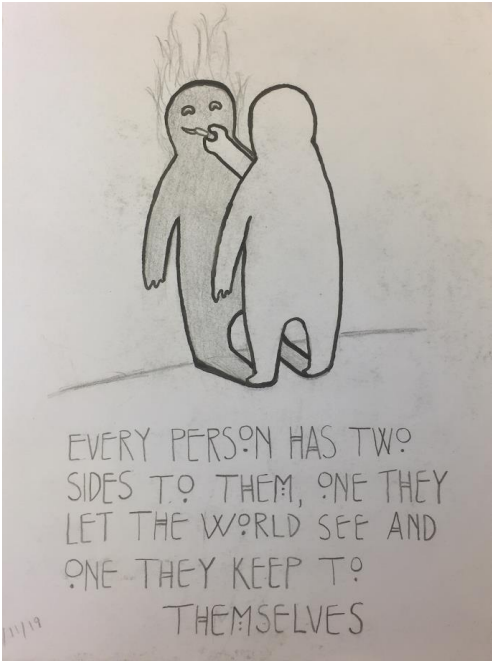
EMILY MOREIRA



WENDY SEOYEON KIM



ANTHONY VILLANELLA



GABRIEL GENAO

IZZY SHEHIGIAN





JULIO LUNA



New Perception

Kayla Santiago

She's stagnant in the midst of a spinning world
Surrounded by faces with oblivious souls
Reaches out to those who comprehend this painful isolation
Then soon feels a sense of tranquility when she is united
with faces that know
That care and share the past she holds
She takes the hands of familiarity and begins spinning with
the world



LILLY WATSON



KELLY WANG

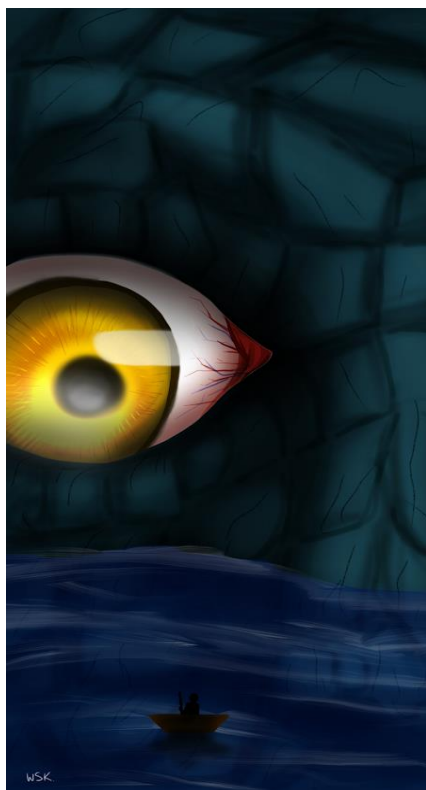


IRENE SHIM



KELLY WANG

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ASHLEY SORTO

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IZZÝ SHEHIGIAN



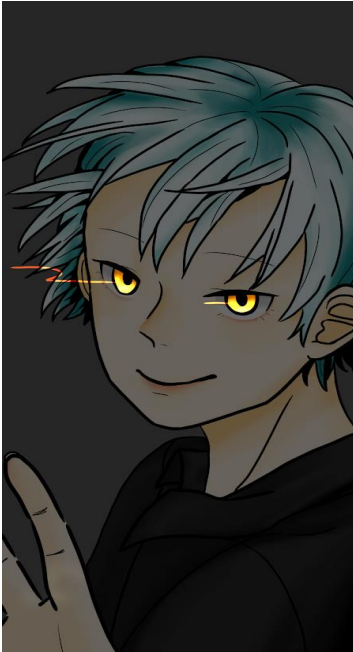
JULIO LUNA



What You Get

Sebastian Zhao

The cracking of our feels
The dispersal of our love
The fading of our tears
We come to believe life is still
We come to believe an eye for an eye
We come to believe life is low
But with a bit of light
Our hopes are bright
The cries are dry
The smiles are high
We can soar through the skies
Make the world bloom into a wonder of the universe



WENDY SEOYEON KIM



LIZ GARCIA



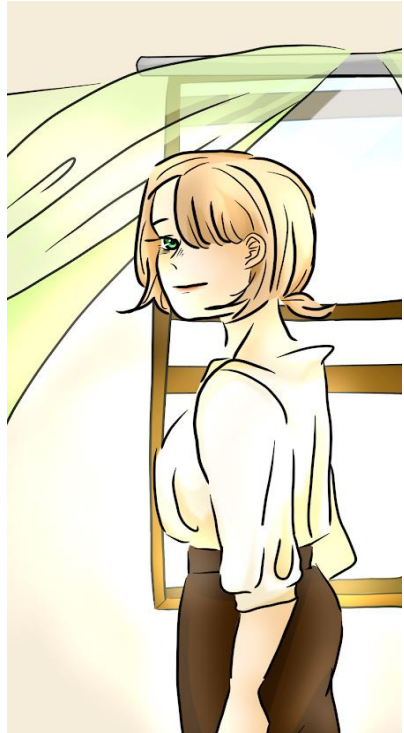
LILLY WATSON

The Flowers to the Heart

Sebastian Zhao

April showers bring may flowers
You may be my showers but you can also bring me
flowers
The way I think about you is passionate and deep
From day to night my mind is on you
Your fragrance and warmth
Those open arms of yours are worth millions in
return
May flowers come from April showers

WENDY SEOYEON KIM



Strike the Day

Sebastian Zhao

The clock rings through the city when the time
strikes 12.
The day blinds those just who have just awoken.
The people scurry to their friends--
They go out to lunch and chat their mouths away.
Up in the skies, the gods do the same.
They plan wars with each other and their robot
servants support their say.
As they holler about what's under the clouds,
The night is silently approaching.
Again, the clock rings through the city when the
time strikes 12.



ASHLEY SORTO

Rise and Shine

Sebastian Zhao

My eyes slowly close as the sun sets in the distance
My dreams bloom as the moon appears into the night sky
The robotic owls coot with the still darkness
The gods in the heavens roar with their fury
The thunder crashes down
All chaos reigns upon the once-calm prairie
The life becomes wild
Animals and robots all cry for help
The dead reap the living
Many days pass...
The silence comes back
The wildlife calms
Everyone is happy
Even the gods in the skies who we can't reach



IZZY SHEHIGIAN



GABRIEL GENAO



ASHLEY SORTO



KELLY WANG



Self-Love
Kayla Santiago

Her wide chocolate eyes lingered upon the angelic body
before her

She observed the lips that released only sweet words of
wisdom

She admired the curves and skin of the woman she
loved

And her lips curved into a toothy smile
when her eyes landed on the woman's feet

Knowing they would only lead her to the path of
success

Her mother often told her she was one of a kind
And, as she gazed into the reflecting glass, she knew
she was a creation untamed



LILLY WATSON

Have Faith

Ryan Tiliouine

whether it is
behind bars
or above the stars
choose wisdom
for you will never be the victim
of disbelief
and you will never suffer
any kind of grief

whether it is
in your mind
or in the sky
no matter the case,
that you may face,
you must always have faith

A Chance Ignored

Dren Sapunxhiu

Looking back now, I see
That I lost the chance when I had it.
I could've pushed through,
But I didn't have trust in it.

Looking back now, I see
That I have more chances coming up.
I will strike through any challenge,
And not once again pass them up.

A Sunny Day Turned into a Storm

Andrea Solis

You made my day brighter
And opened my eyes wider
You opened my heart
How could we have lived apart
But one day things changed
And every day it rained
Then I realized something new
As the pain grew and grew
You left without words
To chase the heart
That was not mine but hers

Love and Friendship

Jon Shaqiri

True love can last forever and ever,
But friendships can end.
There can be fake love,
And there can be fake friends.
People can lead you into doing the wrong things,
So why don't you lead people into doing the right things?
People can ruin your life and happiness.
But life is like a puzzle.
There will be pieces that will not fit together,
But there will be pieces that do fit together.
You just have to find the missing pieces.



WENDY SEOYEON KIM

JULIO LUNA





WENDY SEOYEON KIM



Love

Isaac Yun

Love is like the wind
It can take you away

And if you rush it, it will become a thing of the past
And it may not even last

But don't become weary, happy things are to come
Keep your head held high, and refrain from becoming
numb

Love and Happiness, are the keys to a forever joyous
life

So shut out the negativity, and live a positive and
meaningful life



LIZ GARCIA

Life Being Bright

Sebastian Zhao

The cracking of our feelings
The dispersal of our love
The fading of our tears
We come to believe life is still
We come to believe an eye for an eye
We come to believe life is low
But with a bit of light
Our hopes are bright
The tears are dry
The smiles are high
We can soar through the skies
Make the world bloom into a wonder of the universe



SEBASTIAN ZHAO

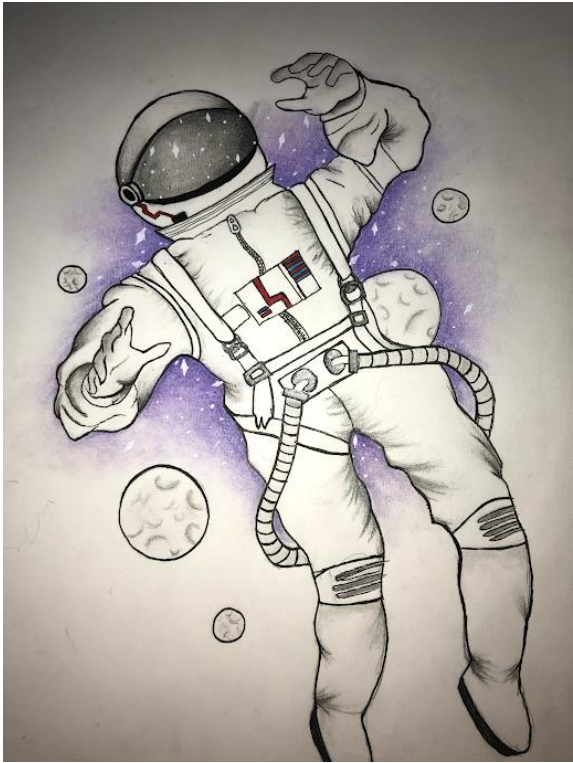


MADELYN SUAREZ





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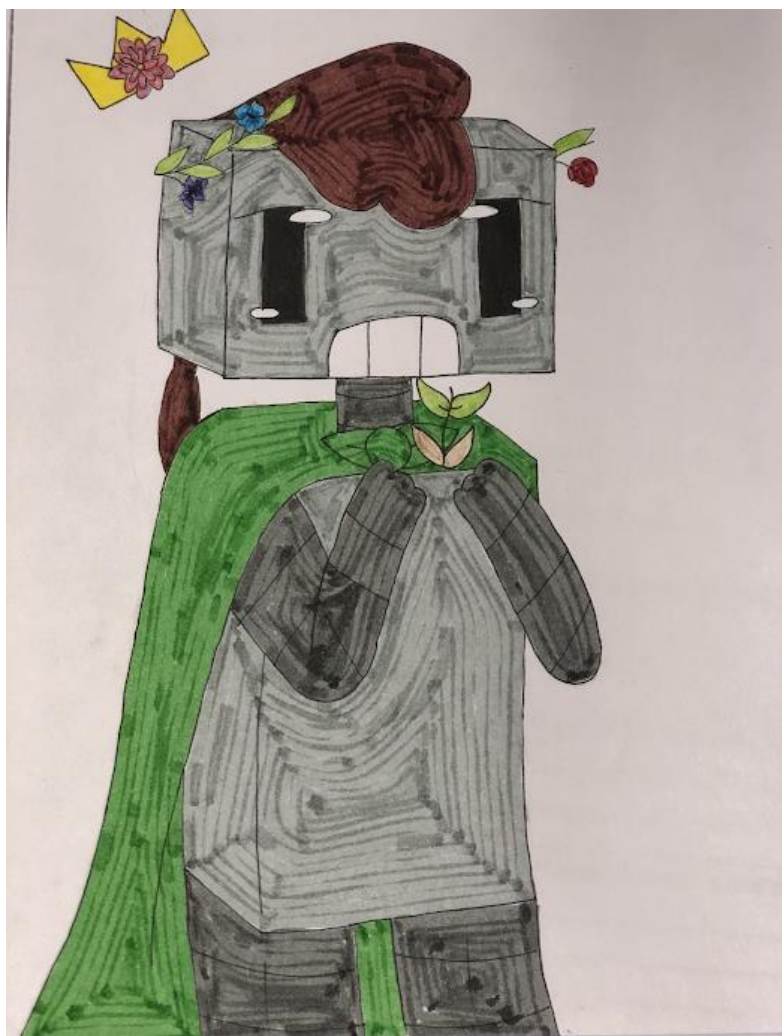
LILLY WATSON



WENDY SEOYEON KIM



WENDY SEOYEON KIM



ALAIDA BARREIRO



LILLY WATSON

Real Love

David Lopez

In the abyss of loneliness lies a monster
Worse than those in our closets and under our beds
But we ourselves,
When we truly can't learn to love from within,
Become those monsters.

Real love suffers,
Goes through pain,
Goes through a symphony of ache
Only the truest example of this emotion, however,
Never breaks.

Real love hurts
Forgets
Forgives
The only true example of this emotion, however,
Always lives to give.



DIANA CHITIC

Youth

Stephen Park

Two leaves are tied onto a tree
One leaf is as light as a feather
The other leaf is under the weather
The green leaf was boastful had no fear
The sullen leaf was tired; Time is near
The prideful leaf always looked down to its neighbor
Laughing
Bragging
Taunting
Treated like an object-a “Thing”
Two leaves are tied onto a tree
One leaf is as bright as day
The other leaf knew time was today
The green leaf was energetic, had no fear
The sullen leaf was glad, it cheered
The prideful leaf had confusion on its face
The ancient leaf knew it was going to a better place



KELLY WANG

Spring in December

Izzy Shehigian

Outside, the snow was falling from the rooftops while children danced around with frosted fingertips, laughing in the face of sickness.

Icicles hung from doorways and everywhere you turned was a jolly snowman sporting a silk black hat and bright orange nose.

Snow was glistening and crunching with every step you took, and yet, when I was by his side, everything felt *warm* to me.

He was like hot chocolate on the coldest of evenings, a steaming shower after the busiest of days, like *Spring in December*.

His laugh melted frowns off of people's lips and brought a smile to even the gloomiest of faces.

With the two of us, arm and arm, I felt I could take on the burliest of men without breaking a sweat. I felt I could do just about anything, as long as he believed I could.

As the oncoming nights grew dark and bitter, my thoughts were overcome by his deep brown eyes and chestnut hair. If I stayed still for long enough, I could almost feel his body pressed up against mine, sound asleep, like he used to do those many years ago.

Two years passed, then five, then eight, and yet I still never let his memory fade from my mind.

Without him, my winters are now bleak once more, as he always brought out the beauty in nature when I could never *truly* see.

The snow doesn't fall as it did when he passed, as the children don't dance and the snowmen don't smile.

Winter is just another season, and I shall never experience another *Spring in December*.

The Tree

Wooreen Choy

Flowers that bloom, leaves that fall,
Branches outstretched, reaching high
Like a sentinel standing tall
The tree withers as days go by
But the old, warm-hearted tree gives relentlessly
A maze of branches shelters the busy animal
Dipping low from the weight of fruits, the tree gives out its
crops happily
Year after year, the tree keeps many different memories
Like the little boy who climbed up his branches and couldn't
get down
Like the wrinkled couple who sat in the shade singing
nurseries
Even its very first memory, when it was planted by the town
In the last stages of the tree's life, it was cut down by men
And housed a family, content knowing that it made someone
happy again.



KAYLA SANTIAGO

Youth

Yaeun Jung

Take a look at that beautiful bouquet of roses,
their stems cut short and sitting still in a clear crystal vase.
Like a doll, they look to be alive, but looks can be
deceiving.

Inside, they are just an empty shell painted to look pleasing.
This is what we've become,
chasing around our needs like hungry wolves who smell
blood;

blinded by the momentary pleasure.

We're no better than those roses--

useless, but beautiful;

serene, but fearful.

This is what we call the most beautiful moment in life,
youth.

Where I thought to be the sea, was really, a desert;
dry waves of sand and dust choking down my throat.

Who I trusted to be there to see, I only saw the reflection of
myself.

The flowers that I was holding desperately,
were nothing more than a delusion.

Like a baby sea turtle, I broke out of my world.

And I crawl towards the sea, away from the land and
trouble.

As the waves embrace me, they wash away the sand and
dust off of me.

Where I thought to be a desert, it was really, a sparkling sea.

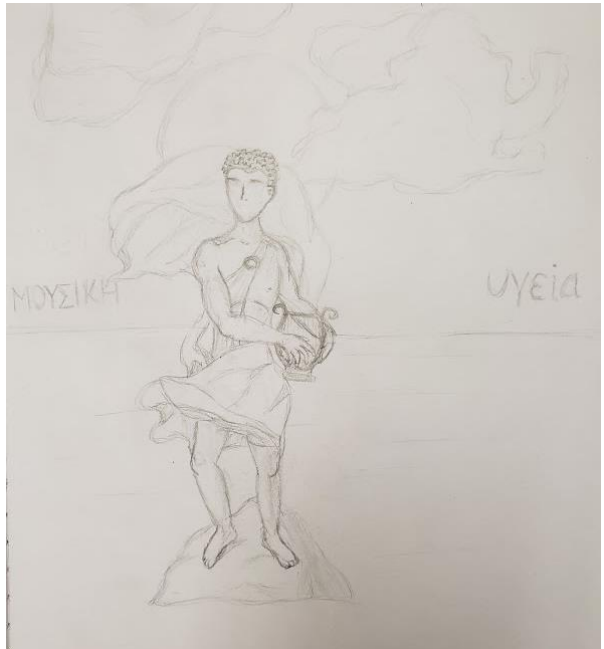
This is what we call the most beautiful moment in life,
youth.

Everything is Temporary

Yamilex Machado

We don't have all the time in the world
Everything is temporary
Even everlasting love doesn't exactly last
Time for the grieving could feel eternal
Days could feel like years
And even if it feels as if years are passing, the grieving
eventually stops
Everything is temporary
Love goes on for years and may only feel like minutes
Hours could pass by and the time you had would still not be
enough
So enjoy the time you have
The good, the bad and unexplainable
Learn off what happened yesterday and live in the present
Because everything is temporary

MANNY OCAMPO



Graduation Grief

Christian Grippa

Had my back,
At all times,
When we were together, time flew by,
You had my back,
I had yours,
Having a good time,
Was never a chore,
However, I lost you
Back in June,
When all the flowers bloomed,
That's when I was beset with gloom,
You were my best friend,
I wish I cherished you till the very end



VÍCTOR SUAREZ

Dive

Junnie Chung

For this world to survive
there must be the selfless and selfish,
For this world to thrive
there must be the cautious and rebellious.
But life is better spent when there is happiness and delight
instead of strife and fighting.
Don't be afraid to take a dive,
whether the water is shallow or deep, a dive is a dive.
So live life alive and free, be bold and undefined.



LILLY WATSON

Beauty is Confidence

Alisa Park

Everyone is beautiful in their own way
some have more confidence than others
but the real beauty is what comes from the inside
Nobody is perfect
perfect is ugly
perfect doesn't exist
Everyone has their own sense of beauty
beauty is just a matter of what others see
beauty is your own confidence



KELLY WANG

Gods

Andrea Kitchener

I want to be a god
Sounds strange, I'm know. But it's true
Zeus never has to worry about being invisible
Athena never worried about her grades
Aphrodite never had to fret over how she looks
On the flip side...
Hera is always thinking about her husband
Hephaestus, god of forgery, was thrown off a mountain
since Aphrodite thought he was ugly
Hades was sent to rule over the underworld all because he
drew the shortest string
I guess gods aren't all powerful
I'll just be happy being myself

Fight Through

Kayla Santiago

Even with the harsh winds assailing my face
I walk through
Even with the rain of fear and regret drenching my once-
pure and dry skin
I neglect an umbrella of protection
And when the taunting,
Patronizing thunder and lightning make themselves known,
I will continue to tread up the path leading to my throne,
My throne made up of my pain
My smiles
My tears and my laughter
When I sit upon the throne,
I'll be glad for the harsh winds
I'll be appreciative of the consuming rain
I will strike back at the lighting
And embrace the thunder

On the Inside

Izzy Shehigian

I walk the halls, one foot in front of the other, like I'd do on any regular day. All around me, youths are rushing to get to their classes on time while others are slacking behind by the lockers. From the outside, I look normal, blending in with the crowd trying my hardest not to stand out. I laugh and converse with friends and acquaintances and fret about not handing in my homework on time, like any average high schooler has, but no one truly knows what I feel within. I go through my daily routines with this prying matter weighing down on my shoulders, never forgetting it's there. I live my everyday life knowing I will, without a doubt, never feel whole.

Yes, I'm still young, there is no question, but what I have to endure while hours tick away would drive some mad. I yearn for something, *anything*, that will make me who I feel I was meant to walk the Earth as, yet nothing comes. All those wishes made, yet none answered.

As much as I hate to admit it, I know the only place I can really, *genuinely* be myself, is *on the inside*.

Composition of Rainbow Life

Sebastian Zhao

Wished the stars were once red
Wanting the skies to be orange
Making the ground yellow
Having the people turn green
Manufacture the world blue
Molding the creation of life purple



KELLY WANG

A Glass Figurine

Arturo Calderon

I was young
I was carefree
I was naive
I was careless
I broke.

I am cracked
I am anxious
I am scared
I am imperfect
I am broken.

But there you stay
By my side, even
When I feel like
I am in pieces.
You are the only one who makes
Me whole.

Wings of Rebellion

Arturo Calderon

When they sit, you stand
When they walk, you run
When they yell 'stop' you go
Where others run away
You dare to trudge on.

You are not afraid to
Go against the current
You are not afraid to
Stand with your truth
Even when others doubt you.

You are not alone
Even when others call
You a miscreant or
Even a felon
I will be there as your
Wings of Rebellion.



GABRIELLE LEHMAN



ALADA BARREIRO



WENDY SEOYEON KIM

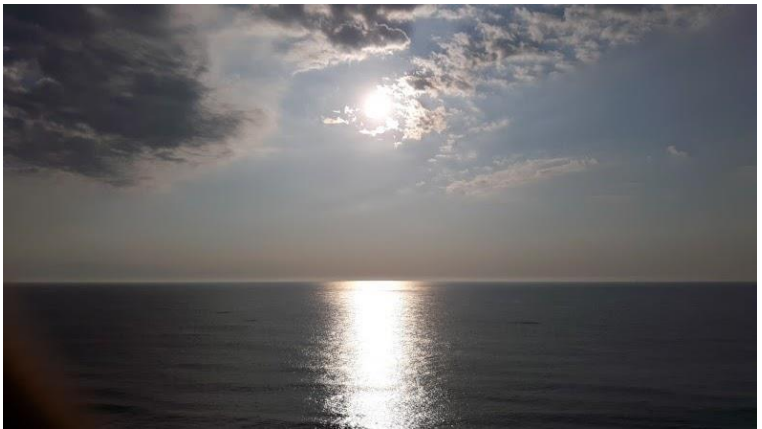
JULIO LUNA



Catch Me if You Can...

Victor Suarez

It was a bright afternoon; the sun was out and the temperature was cool. The noise of children in a large group died down, and it was silence like a famine passing by. As you closed your eyes and shut the thoughts out of your head, the only thing you would hear was your heart beating calmly. The countdown in your head was ready to reach at one. BANG! In just a flash dirt, dust, and grass flew up into the air and rain fell down from the heavens. The stampeding of children was as close to a giant lumbering in the woods. As coaches cheered with glee and went all loose and wild for a sweet victory. We ran like horses and climbed up hills to mountains in a short period of time. Our hearts beat the devil's sad tune for going up and down, and we knew not to stop or get left behind. I felt fresh air pass through my hair and heard the glory of other kids cheering to go further to the end. As we made it to the end of the race, we felt tired and dizzy, proud to finish. It really doesn't matter how slow or fast you are but how you finished the job.



GABRIEL GENAO

Luminous Rose

Arianna SedaRivera

There stands a boy
With a broken heart and holding a rose,
A rose that was once a symbol of their love and slowly wilted

The boy begs again and again
But the girl declines
Again and again

The boy's heart is hurt and in pain
He cries and begs more
He tries to make that wilted rose be reborn,
Yet the girl still declines

The boy regrets his past
But still believes there's a chance
Believes in hope

He won't give up but it's hopeless
The girl has decided it's over forever
And there's no going back

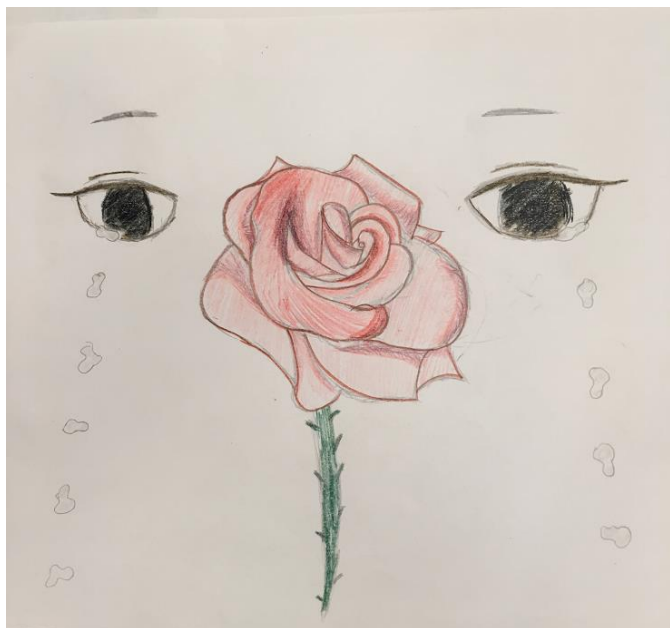
The boy wants to tell the girl about his hurting heart,
His heart turning into a wilted rose
But the girl doesn't give him the chance

The girl in pain remembers their past
The painful and hurtful past
A boy and two girls, one herself and the other a stranger

The girl moves on and slowly recovers
Learns to love and her heart is reborn
Someone new, someone nice

A new beginning
A new life
A happy ending
And a blooming rose

IRENE SHIM



Love Takes Time

Sebastian Zhao

She dreams of him from a distance
He looks away without acknowledgement
She wants to ask for his heart
But her fear pushes her back
A friend went to her
He said maybe
Her heart broke as she thought about his response
What is it?
An acceptance?
A rejection?
The mystery is unknown but her love for him is real
His love is beneath his mind
Somewhere in his mind but unknown

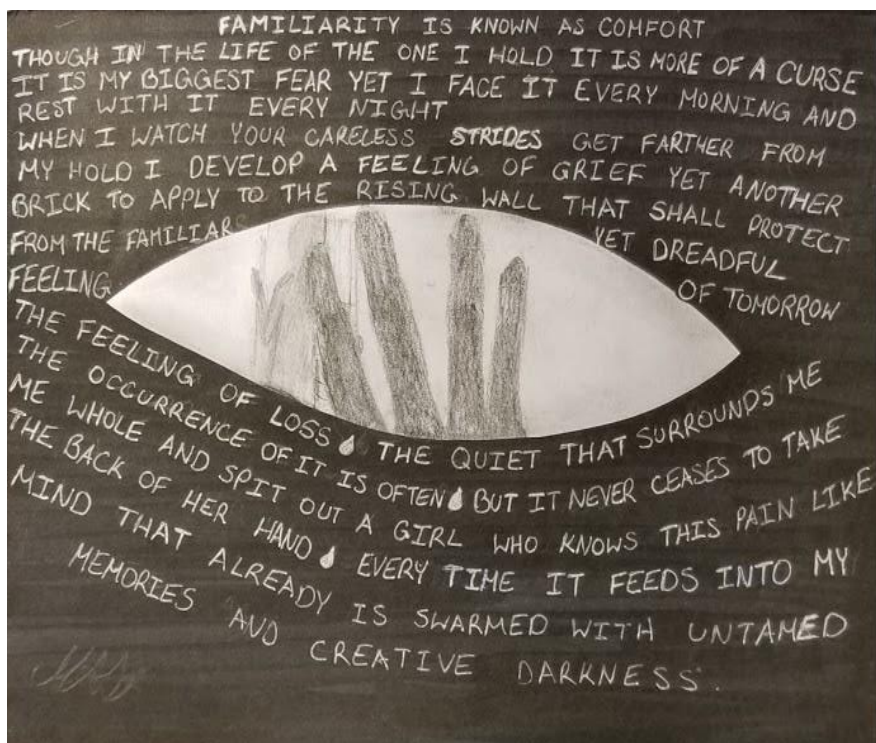
Love

Kayla Santiago

You don't deserve love
You don't deserve a smile
And you don't deserve happiness
Because, from my years of experiencing the person
within you,
I have come to the conclusion
that Love deserves You
Love should be spread
through someone with the wisdom that you store in
your soul,
Compassion you hold in your heart,
And no one can love the way you do
That Smile is blessed to be worn by You
Blessed to be shining upon your kind face
Below your angelic eyes and round nose
Best of all
Happiness will never be real
Unless it rests in You
You soar above what most can see
You not only reach for the stars
But with all the ambition you have
You grasp them
Flaunt that Smile
Embrace every ounce of Happiness
And release your unconditional Love



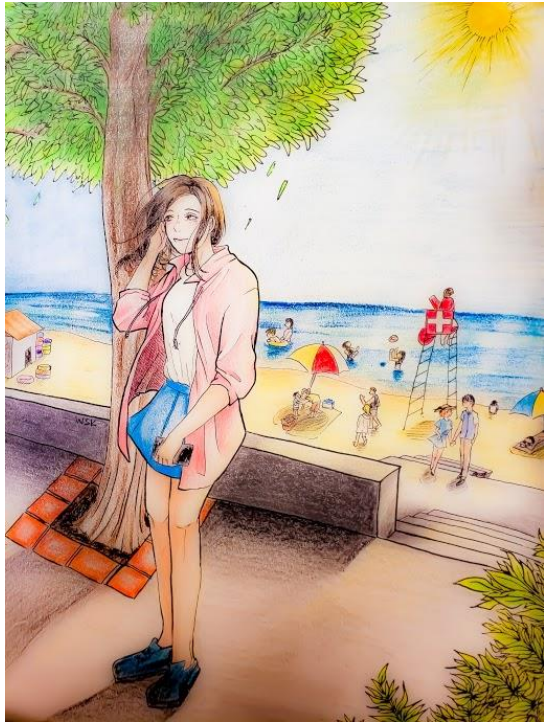
EMILY MOREIRA



POEM: KAYLA SANTIAGO / DRAWING: MADELYN SUAREZ



MADELYN SUAREZ



WENDY SEOYEON KIM



STEPHEN PARK



ASHLEY SORTO



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MADELYN SUAREZ



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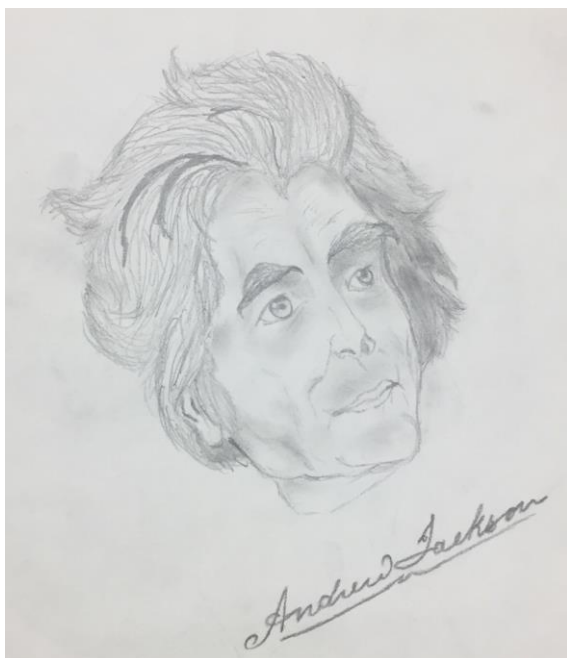
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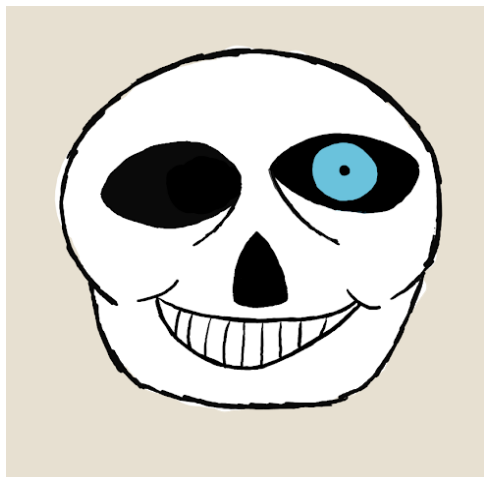
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GABRIEL GENAO



IZZY SHEHIGIAN



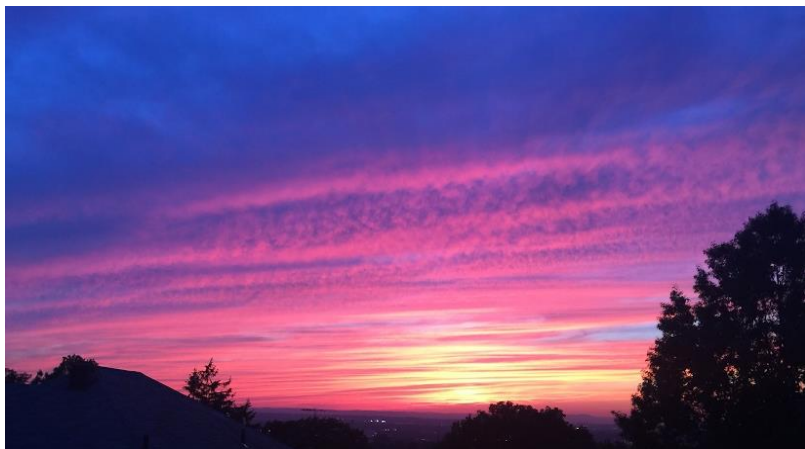
MADelyn SUAREZ

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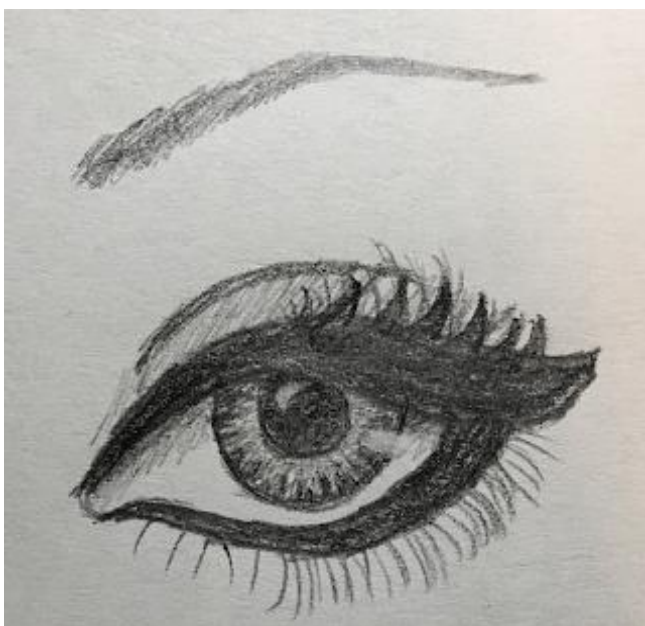


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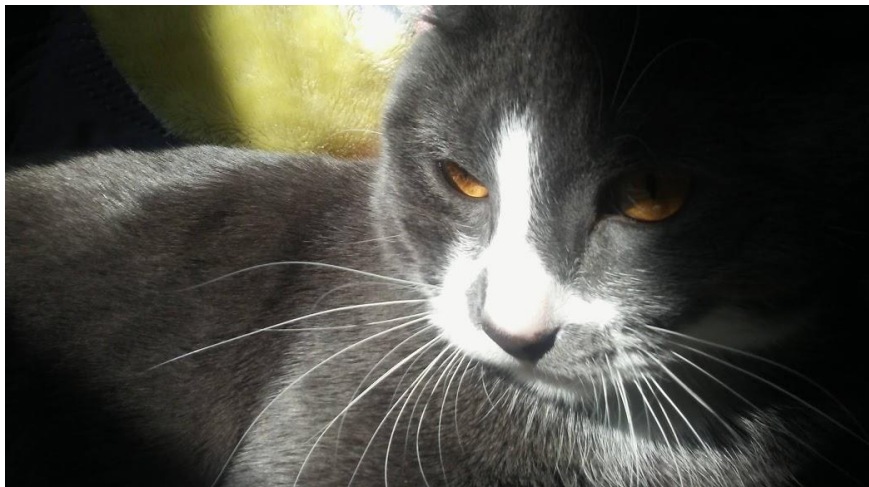
IZZÝ SHEHIGIAN



IRENE SHIM



ANTHONY VILLANELLA



DIANA CHITIC



MADELYN SUAREZ



DIANA CHITIC



LIZ GARCIA

Beast in the Subway

Arturo Calderon

It was late at night, dark; the sky was vacant of stars and the moon, hidden behind dark clouds, was just barely visible. The year was 2079, at least that's what Ellie's parents told her. Time had become mostly irrelevant, a piece of the past that few remember, most only paying attention to the passing of seasons and the migration of what became of the animals of Earth. Ellie May was one of the few who remembered the calendar; it was somewhere in the middle of June; days were long and hot, the nights short and refreshingly cool. But this night was far worse than the others, especially for Ellie. She was venturing out into the ruins of New York City, once bright and towering skyscrapers were now only shells of their former selves. Dark, decrepit, and overgrown with plants, some had been knocked down years ago and were now mounds of grass and moss. Ellie was checking the local stores and supermarkets for anything remotely useful: food, bottled water, duct tape, anything that wasn't nailed down she would grab and stuff into her book bag, which was worn and patched but held everything she carried. She had just finished raiding a corner store of its supply of candy bars, a rare delicacy, when she heard a low growl from outside the store, followed by loud, clawed footsteps.

The store was small, with a single glass door leading inside and a large broken window next to it. She dove under the window, her hand over her mouth to control her breathing as she slowly peeked over the window sill to find the source of the sound. Less than fifty feet away from the store was a monster of a dog; to even call it a dog was a bit of a stretch. On its four massive legs it looked taller than her, each leg ending with a clawed paw. Its matted fur was a dirty grey, bald patches revealed reddish skin underneath with veins clearly visible. Its head was misshapen, its muzzle was stout, but its mouth was filled with large

canines, almost half a foot long and yellow. Its ears were large and mostly hairless and it had large yellow eyes with slit pupils. It lifted its monstrous head and sniffed the air around it, as if looking for something. She realized too late what it was looking for, as its eyes trained on her, it snarling as it crouched low and it leapt towards the window.

In one swift movement she grabbed her bag and jumped through the glass door just as the Beast crashed into the store, knocking over shelves and scattering glass all over the floor. Ellie was looking around the street, the dark made finding a safe place to hide difficult. From down the street, a sliver of moonlight peaked through the clouds, a sign label “New York City Subway” shone against the dark. With no other options and very little time to think, she broke into a sprint towards the subway as fast as her legs could carry her. By the time she reached the stairs that lead down into the subway, the Beast has crawled itself out of the store through the broken window. While not able to see “her,” it could smell her; it made a slow walk to the subway with its nose close to the ground. Ellie raced down the stairs, skipping two, three steps at a time. She made her way to a subway platform. Without stopping to rest she jumped off the platform, pulling a small flashlight from her bag she ran into one of the tunnels, the sound of a distant howl echoing behind her.

Not surprisingly, she found herself lost in the tunnels. There was no light save for her flashlight, lighting a narrow beam in front of her. Thankfully, and also worryingly, she couldn’t hear the Beast; perhaps she lost it in the tunnels. “Doubtful...” she said with a furrow of her brow, it was unlikely that it would lose her; if it could smell her before it could do so now. Wandering further into the tunnels she could spot the platform of a station. Walking further and climbing up onto the platform, she saw that it was an underground shopping center, mostly small shops for coffee, candy, and pastries. Some other shops had some

things that caught her eye-- portable water bottles, tape, and, probably one of the most important things at the time, batteries. Wasting no time, she quickly stuffed as many batteries and rolls of tape as she could into her bag; she used some of the stronger duct tape to patch up her bag which was now splitting at the seams from the weight. She looked around for a way back to the surface; after close to ten minutes she found a powered down escalator and walked up the steps. A minute after she left, the Beast had made its way to the platform, following Ellie's scent. It climbed up the side of the platform, waving its nose in the air and sniffing heavily. It stalked around the shops, carefully sniffing inside, knocking over a few stands that got in its way. Its ears twitched, catching a distant sound that seemed to have come from above it. It sniffed the ground again, locking onto her recent trail and followed it up the escalator.

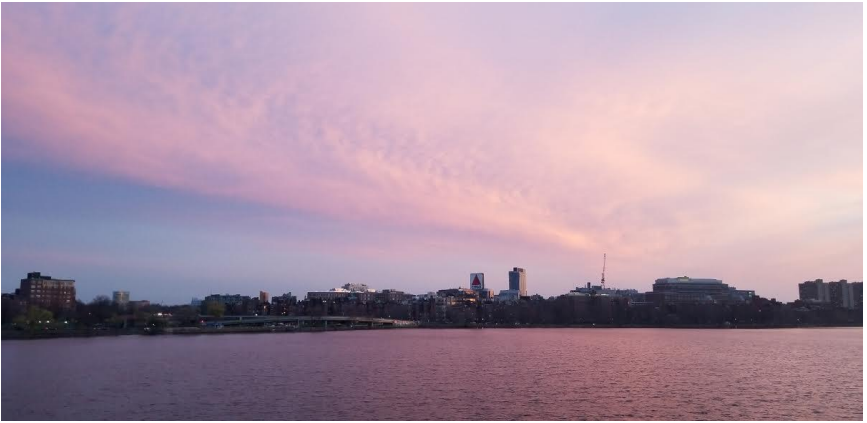
Ellie couldn't have had any worse luck; she just got a bag full of fresh batteries, but forgot to change the ones in her flashlight. When her flashlight died, she noticed it too late and stumbled over a root that was sticking out of the ground. She fell forward and hit the ground hard--her face, particularly her nose, connected with the moss-covered tile floor, which was anything but soft. She curled up on the floor, holding her nose in her hands. A quick check told her that it wasn't broken, nor was it bleeding. Ellie dusted herself off and tried to stand, only to fall down with a sudden pain in her ankle. Her ankle was swollen and hurt when she touched it. She felt around for her fallen flashlight; there was almost no light but she found it nearby. She pulled a fresh pair of batteries from her bag and changed the ones in her flashlight. Turning the flashlight on, she looked around. It was a station, overgrown with vines and creepers. The walls appeared to be cracked and very unstable. Grabbing a stick that was close by, she used it as a crutch and managed to stand, albeit a bit lopsided. Shining the light above her, she could see the shattered remains of a skylight, the light reflecting off of the last shards of glass that clung

to the metal framework. Through the skylight, she could see the faintest rays of light shining through; it was almost sunrise. She looked around and found a train that looked like it hadn't been used in decades, pieces of broken glass, a small puddle of trapped rain water, and finally at the other end of the station, a way out. The other side of the station was collapsed; the rubble created a steep pathway that she could use to climb out. She hobbled her way over, using the stick as an anchor she started to slowly climb the pile of rubble.

Ellie had just managed to get a few feet off the ground when she heard a frighteningly familiar growl behind her, followed by a feral bark. She snapped her head behind her and hastily shone her flashlight in the direction of the noise. The Beast flinched back a step from the sudden flash of light, blinking its yellow eyes as it focused on Ellie; its eyes narrowed as it crouched low before leaping and bounding towards her. Ellie shoved the flashlight back into her pocket and began to climb faster, her ankle screaming in protest at the sudden change of pace. Ellie was halfway up when the Beast reached the rubble; it used its large claws as hooks and started to climb the pile much faster than Ellie. In a panic, she reached for a loose rock in the rubble and flung it at the Beast, hitting it on the nose; it distracted the Beast for a moment, who responded with a bark and continued to climb. Every time it got close, Ellie chucked a rock at it, giving her time to put some distance between them. The Beast eventually had enough, it brought up its legs and, with a final burst of energy, it flung itself at Ellie, soaring through the air like a malformed bird. Ellie screamed and braced herself for the jaws and claws of the Beast. But it missed, just barely. The Beast landed besides Ellie, snapping its jaws at her but was a few inches short. It tried to get a grip on the rubble, but the impact caused it to become loose, and the rubble started to collapse. Ellie rushed to the top of the pile, ignoring the pain in her ankle and her hand touched the top of the pile. She pulled herself up onto the top and

took a quick glance around; she could see the city, she was just above the street and if she slid she could get down to it easily. The Beast had managed to reach the top of the rubble as well; it lunged just as Ellie slid down, missing by mere inches. The Beast started to slide backwards; the entire pile was collapsing. It fell back down into the station; the rubble was pushing against the already crumbling walls. The walls give way; the entirety of the station collapsed on itself, burying the Beast within.

Ellie took her first calm breath in a while, without the worry of a monster breathing down her neck. She then noticed the pain in her ankle again; she hadn't noticed it when she was trying to escape but it was certainly worse than it originally was. She propped herself up with the stick she had and stood up, looking out towards the rising sun that had just started to peek out from between the ruined buildings. She started to walk away when she heard something from the collapsed station behind her; four more "dogs" had come to investigate the rubble, they were much smaller than the Beast, but were as big as a large normal dog. They were sniffing around the rubble, some trying to dig into it. The smallest of the four noticed Ellie, cocking its head to side and stared at her. Ellie's blood turned to ice, her body went rigid, she wouldn't be able to run in her state. All she could do was stare, as the small Beast came closer and closer. The two stared at each other for what seemed like an eternity, and then...it turned and left. The other three Beasts were already gone; the last of the four ran off with a yelp to catch up with its siblings. Ellie stared at the spot where the small Beast was in disbelief. She dropped to her knees, breathing heavily as she stood on the verge of a panic attack. After a moment, she picked herself off the ground; she felt safe for the moment, despite what could've been the end of her; without a moment to waste, she left the station's ruins, happy to have survived. But what of tomorrow, and the next day, and the next? Only fate will tell, Ellie hopes that she will remain within its good graces.



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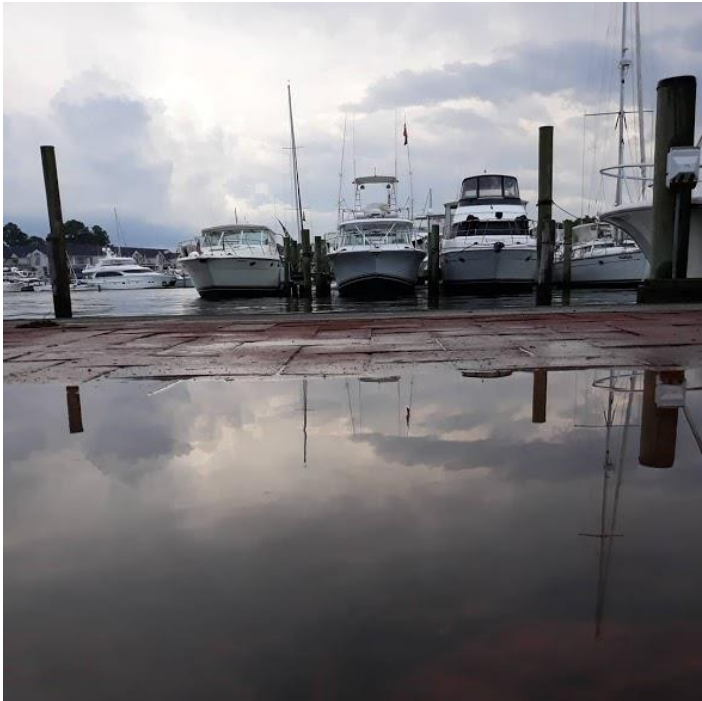


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