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#### time -anonymous what are years but time long

what are seconds but a front flip of time

what are minutes but thinking slowly

what are hours but time with minecraft

what are games but distractions from time



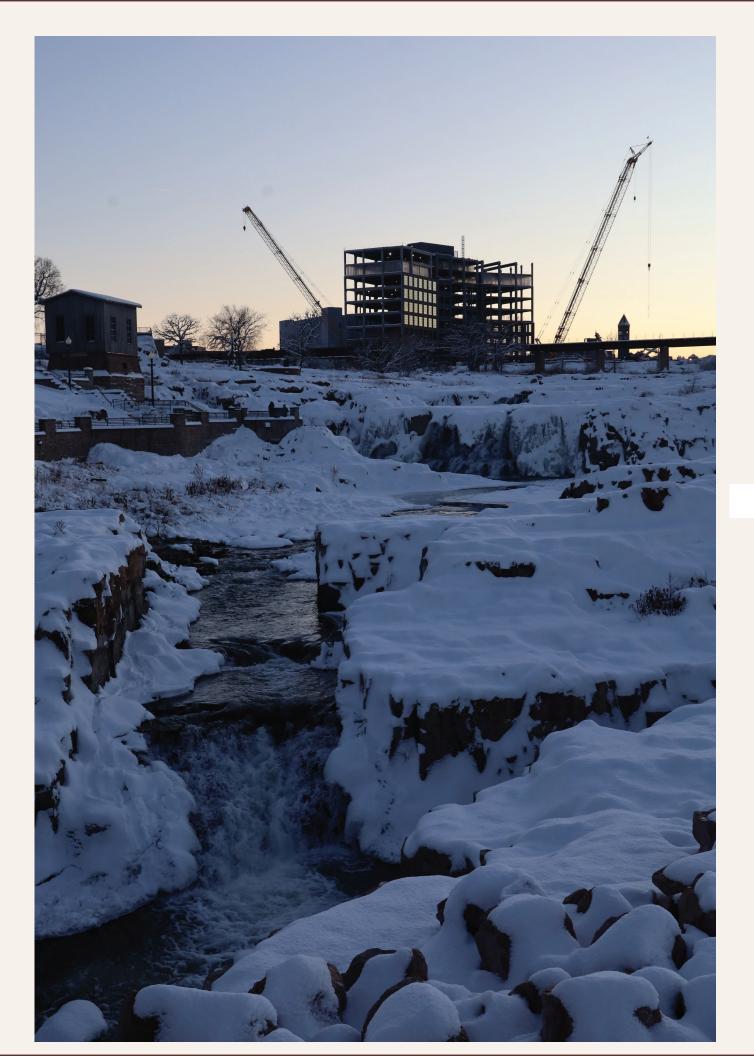




Photo by Kyler Lo

#### A Garden Beneath The Sky by Caleb Tiradani

It was a brilliant new day. The trees shined with glistening droplets of morning dew, the flowers glowed with summer petals, and the grass freely danced in the light breeze. Bees buzzed around lazily, for there was no reason to worry about which of the plentiful flowers to choose from. The air was nice and clear, crispy with minor puffs in the sky, giving the perfect balance of shade and sun. This beautiful land was tended by a lone person.

Today was the fourth day of seven, which meant that the outside gates and groves need to be inspected and repaired if needed.

Bouncing out of the shop, Raym1d flew buoyantly through the air and into one of the mechs that was lying around his abode. He plugged himself into the machine with his left hand, booted up the mech and began to march over to the edge of his domain. He walked past a sign that would announce to any human nearby that this was the town of Basskell in the country of Mayfeild. He always wondered what that meant, but at the same time humans were evil. They brought the world to this point. For all he knew he was tending the last bit of nature left on the planet, but that's besides the point.

He said Hi to his Fox friend who had snuggled up against an old willow, and continued to the edge of the groves, where he would tend to the gate and the outer groves of pine and oak.

He hopped off the machine and inspected the metal wicker and decided that the rust wasn't too bad, which meant he could move on to trimming the gate. He used the mech to cut away at the growing vines and roots, before giving the gate another round of oil. He then moved onto the Forest, clearing the old paths and any other branches that may have been damaged during an old storm. As he worked, he hummed an old tune, one that he remembered his... maker sang. She used to sing it in a beautiful voice that would make even the crankiest baby calm down and fall to sleep. He could remember the voice now a bit clearer than normal... "Oh!"

A woman's voice echoed through the forest, and Raym1d screeched to a halt. He quivered. Humans were evil...,

"Hello?" He asked softly.

"Hello." The woman... no girl, she was young, the girl's voice replied.

He slowly exited the mech, and looked around frantically.

"I'm here." She said, and he looked up to find her sitting in one of the oaks.

She nimbly dropped down and he could get a look at her. She wore tattered clothing, jeans, sweatshirt, cloak, and a curious ripped shirt that was torn in the midriff; while the left sleeve went all the way down to her wrist, her right had been cut at the elbow. The only things that didn't seem damaged were her goggles and her scarf. "Who are you!" Raym1d asked, trembling.

"Just a wander trying to find shelter." She sighed, apparently something weighed on her.

"Go away, go away. You people bad, you people evil. Destroy nature, destroying my work!"

"You people created you."

"—-" that shut him up.

"The parrots told me there was a sanctuary here. Away from people. Are they right?" The stupid parrots. They always let on more than they should.

Should he let in this person though?

The killers of nature, the evil people who left earth in such a mess?

He sat there, quietly, shaking, before reaching a decision.

"Fine. Follow the paths to my shop. You can see the mechprints on the ground." "Thank you." Her voice was solemn.

He finished his work that day and came back to the shop, forgetting she was there.

"I hope you don't mind, I popped open a beer."

"Oh." Raym1d startled, before sliding behind the counter.

"Is there anything I can get you?"

"A salad please, unless you have any beef." He remembered something like that.

He prepared the salad in the kitchen area in the back before he heard her singing the tune.

"Where did you learn that tune?" He asked, as he brought the meal out.

"You don't remember? I thought you would still have a small bit of memory from that time before." He hesitated. "Are you...?"

"It's been a while, friend. You have done your job well." And for the first time that day they both smiled and laughed.



Photo by Baron Martin

# Wanderer above the Sea of Fog (inspired by the painting by Casper David Fredrich)

A cold morning above the mountains

by Elijah Helm

A fog, thick and white as milk has set in

And here comes the wanderer.

A well-dressed gentleman

His only possession is a hiking stick.

Huffing and puffing when he reached the top

But now he has a sense of accomplishment and relief.





Who is this man?

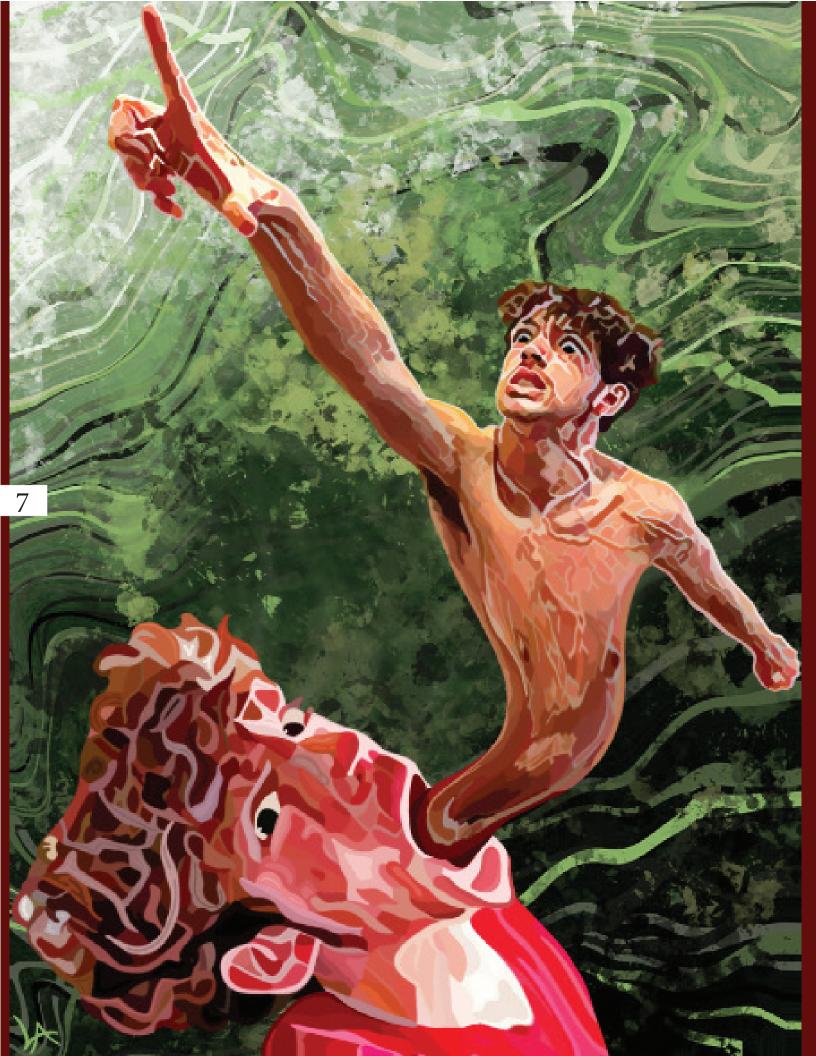
Photos by Kyler Lo

- A soldier?
  - A criminal?
    - An explorer?
      - Or is it you Casper?

Our world is full of such wonders, mysteries, and beauty.

Maybe something as simple as a man looking over fog

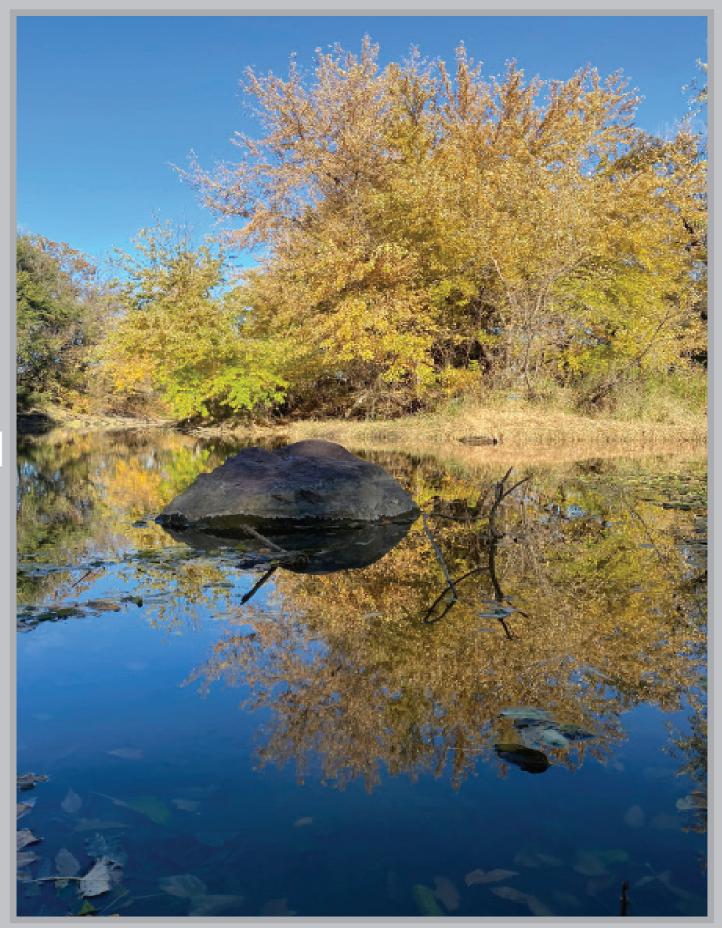
can be understood for nature's emotions, curiosity, and maybe hope.



### Chasing After Our Ends Photo and Story by Lyric Allen

Do you ever feel trapped in your own mind? When you try to break out, your past trauma sucks you into a hole of emptiness. Sucked into the neverending void. Your words are way more vital than your actions. It's like your words are chasing after you, constantly, starting battles by the second, never to end. Battling yourself continuously. Your words are held back by nothing but your tongue. Words are very powerful. They can make or break you. Build you up or rip you to pieces. They are everything you are. Without words and trauma, what are we? What is shaping us? We remember what hurts more than we can restore the good. It's easier to be evil than to be real. You must break out of yourself, in a way that opens your eyes to find the lightness. Being like everyone else is boring. Why be like all when you can fall into anything with a wrong mind? When you are at your lows in life, the world likes to stab you the most. If I don't break out I will never be free.

In this world, you have to take risks. Every night you close your eyes; you take a risk. We know we might not wake up but did you live the last day to the best of your ability? If I don't spread my wings, I will not fly anywhere, but I will fall to the ground, and break. There are a lot of things that make us unique but we all see the downfalls first. We tend to swallow our problems deep down inside, to reveal a much "mask-ier" feel. We all go through dark times, some harder than others, but why can't we use our past abuse as a way to define ourselves? Coping mechanisms have changed a lot as well. Drugs, alcohol, abuse, all evil. It seems like the average citizen spends more of their life down not up. Like a two-step forward, three-step backward situations constantly. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the evilness lurks below, pulling us deeper into the hole that nobody wants to go. It's a never-ending cycle unless you break free and find the lightness above. If not, you lose the battle to yourself, and all of your past trauma, too weak to build you up this time. If he is our friend, he will be chasing after our ends.







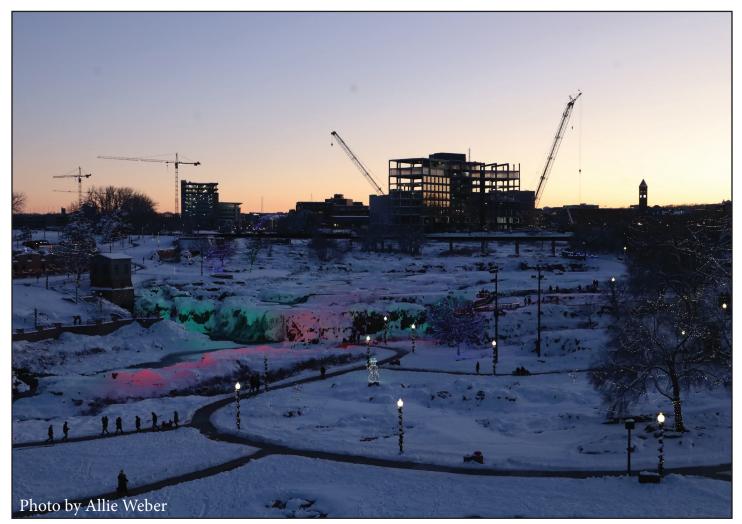
	Night after night, they never stop.
	They're always here. Their long bodies, and white
	eyesstandingnexttomybed. Staring at me, filling me with fear.
	Tihey never move, never speak. It's always different,
	There could be one, and the next night many surrounding me.
	l don't feel safe in my own home.
Photo by Kyler Lo	When they are here, I feel unwanted, like I'm not
	supposed to be here. Theireyes, telling metoleave, getout.
	l am not welcome here anymore. – anonymous

#### time is a cruel man: the 'thank you' note

by Sabrina Aubuchon

I was thinking about the second Alice in Wonderland: Through the Looking Glass. And the main theme is that Alice is trying to fight Time. She can't she has to play by Time's rules. That in the end, it's up to him. She runs around the clock and meets the minutes head on. Time takes people from you, like he did my dad. He takes and 'never gives.' But you eventually learn that he does give. A person can't win a race against Time. You have to trust his process. It'll unravel in its own way, that you can't force what Time will tell.

So I take it back, Time isn't a cruel man. He does what he needs to and my father's life had to come to an end. If it hadn't, I wouldn't have met my purple, and I wouldn't have realized my love for green. I wouldn't have happy misery, I wouldn't have my bricks from the well, and I wouldn't have all the love I give now. I wouldn't have the life I do now. Thank you, Time, for all that you have given me.





Art credited to Cecelia Brodkorb

# Big mistake.

I'm sitting here trying to listen to the teacher, But other thoughts keep slipping into my mind. Distracting me.

I try to ignore them, shut them up-

But they keep coming.

I eventually give in to the thoughts and let my mind wander. Big mistake.

I lay my head down on the desk and closed my eyes.

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I can't hear anything but my thoughts, can't see anything. I finally get pulled back to reality.

Hearing someone calling my name.

Big mistake.

I open my eyes only to see the teacher standing in front of me.

She asked if I was going to answer her.

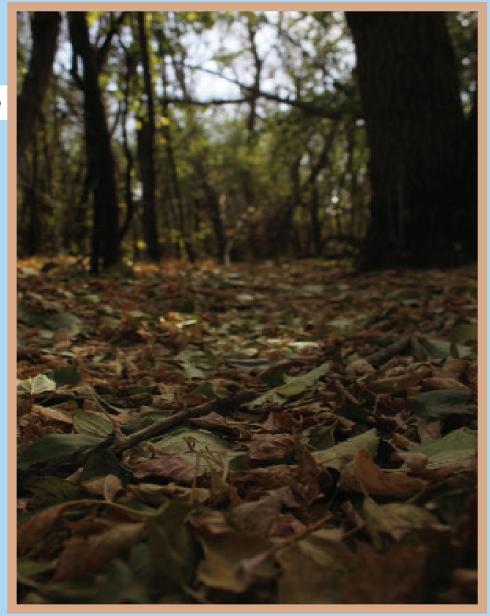
I looked around the room, everyone was staring at me.

I returned my gaze back to the teacher, she stood at my desk waiting for me to respond.

#### Final Passage in a Journal by Elijah Helm

Dear God, dear Lord, dear the almighty, what have we done? I have seen things no man was allowed to see. The bodies, oh the bodies, so many dead human beings. In the town square there were at least 10 piles of dead people. There were men, women, children, lords, knights, and all forms of people were on those piles. All of their hands are black as coal. Some of them weren't dead yet. I could see some of them coughing, vomiting, some were complaining about pain on those disgusting nodes.

Oh Lord, what sins have I committed? I've run the shop well, I stayed loyal to my wife, I've raised my kids to the best of my ability, I went to church every Sunday, I've prayed every night, where did I do wrong? Why must my wife and children die of that excruciating plague? I've killed every cat, avoided every drop of water, prayed every night, and persecuted those non-believers. But why must I suffer in this most despicable world?



The plague is blind yet somehow equal. It kills not just the poor but the rich; it kills not just the lazy but the hard working; it kills not just the people of one kingdom but all the people of all the land. I can hardly afford bread at this point, but thankfully there are several work opportunities if one gives better pay than the other. The plague is always near. It's only a matter of time until its greedy hands touch all of us. When that happens, I can only pray to God that whatever is on the other side, is better than living in this purgatory known as Earth.

Translated passage taken from journal by unknown author. Original journal found in death pile in Florence Italy. Possibly written in the summer of 1353.

Photo by Kyler Lo



Photo by Kyler Lo

#### The State of Boredom by Elijah Helm

How long has she been like this?

Most likely not a long while.

Wonder what she's thinking of amongst the others gliss?

Probably something of an artistic style.

Yet I sit here across the room,

watching you for I have nothing better to do.

For my boredom traps my mind within a tomb,

and we are, at this moment, the exact same two.

Based on "Maria" M.R.H.

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A psychological spell has set in,

when there is no emotion, no purpose, no meaning.

Nothing for a distraction,

no work, no readings, no form of entertainment, but almost dreaming,

for she's doing no action.

Her buxom body, leaning on her desk.

Her fist pressed against her face.

Hair of 1000 coils and twists, hangs low and exquisite.

Doing nothing but staring into space.



Artwork by Cecelia Brodkorb

#### Artwork by Sabrina Aubuchon

Photo by Baron Martin



Photo by Kyler Lo

rainy days

by Sofia Parada Gonzalez

rain rain please please stay i miss you today when it's all grey i miss you today when it's all delayed will you please please stay

**Photo by Kyler Lo** 

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#### A Mental Alarm Clock

#### by Sabrina Aubuchon

I don't know how or why, but my brain wakes me up at 4-5 in the morning every day without fail. Been happening since I was young, and because dad's brain did the same thing, we would have about four hours to hang out together before everyone else woke up. Some days would be sitting and talking while he made breakfast. Other days, we would make our way to the living room and watch Peter Rabbit on Nick Jr.

I woke up and he already had the television set to Peter Rabbit, the episode had already started but I'd seen it before. He laid on the loveseat, feet hitched up against the armrest, facing the TV. I laid atop his calves, chin between his kneecaps, looking at him. "You're in a different spot today," I yawned. "I felt like changing things up a bit," he said. I told him I was gonna draw hippo ballerinas, he said he couldn't wait to see them.

he is a

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Photo by Allie Webber

## Moving Away by Lauren Betsworth

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Moving is always difficult Going away from the place you've always known The place you grew up, the place where all your memories live, Where a lot of firsts' and lasts' happened. In life, they tell you that you need to accept the change, Accept changes that you may not like or want to happen. They tell you that in the end, everything will be better off But how are you supposed to be better off when you are leaving everything behind Even though the change is "for the better" it does not seem better to me. I don't want a bigger living space or more room to put my things, I just want to be back with my memories where they happened. The first days in the new house are rough as expected. Nothing feels right, taking over a living space where someone else's memories lived: Where someone else grew up, where they had their firsts and lasts. Over time I learn that this is the new normal and I just have to accept it. Days and months go by and I start to get used to my new way of living, But no matter what this will never be my true home. Now I drive past the old house and get reminded of the memories. It was moments in my life that are no longer mine, And someone else has started to make their own memories there. As I return ack to my new home, the old memories are still on my mind. But I realize that the old house does not keep hold of my memories, I do. Most of the people I made the memories with are still here with me. That is when I change my perspective on the situation, Home is not a place, home is where my family is.

Photos by Kyler Lo

#### The Path of Life -anonymous

Two Lines Three Lines One path spoken Work, Eat, Sleep repeat Work, Eat, Sleep repeat Break the cycle, make the break Travel past the constraints of society Make your future your own.

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Photo by Kevin Le

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### Pears

#### by Sabrina Aubuchon

I don't remember the name of it but I watched it when I was about 9. It was about a woman who grew the best pears in the world. She had trees in her backyard and the way that it was animated reminded me of a coloring book. She would grow about a thousand a year and she would sell them for...I don't remember how much. But it was a lot, they were expensive pears looking back on it. There was one night where she awoke from a noise and went out to check it... and there was a creature eating the pears right off the tree. It was big and furry and twice the size of her. Always reminded me of a tiny wooly mammoth. But it was a very friendly mammoth, and she thought it was so friendly that she kept it. She kept it for years apparently and there was a long ass montage of them living life together. Come to find out, it wasn't a creature at all. It was two children dressed up as one because they wanted to eat the pears. I don't remember how it ended, but I remember 9-year-old Tess picking apart the logic.

First off, how did she not know? I mean, the children had to have used the bathroom at some point in the who-knows-how-many years they were there. Did they pee in the costume? Or did they take it off at nighttime when she was asleep? And when they did, was she ever confused as to why the wild animal was potty-trained? Because they couldn't flush the toilet or else, she'd wake up. We know that she's not a heavy sleeper, because of the beginning when she first meets the "creature" so did she just accept it? Like 'oh yeah, okay the wooly mammoth-type fellow is using the bathroom right now. Cool, why not?' Or maybe the kids would pee outside like dogs.

But if they did that, did the neighbors just not say anything?

Second, where were the children's parents? Or were they orphans? If they came from an orphanage, the orphanage seriously needs to be checked up on. If they're missing two kids for however long, did they just not notice? I was like 'jeez, the people in this town are neglectful,' but maybe the orphanage owners were just cool with it. Like maybe the kids told the owners the plan and they were like 'yeah, sounds good. This place is crowded anyways,' it always made me wonder what kind of life the kids lived before they moved in with the pear farmer.

Third, how did baths work? My dog can't bathe himself; I have to help shampoo his fur and water it down. So, did the pear farmer wash the costume while the kids were inside it? And did the kids never bathe? Because if not, imagine how stinky the pear farmer's pet was. If I wash my clothes and never my body, I'm gonna reek. I wonder if the lady just accepted that her pet was gonna take a shower. If Charlie just took a shower on his own one day, I'd have a few questions. But maybe that's just a me thing. And let's say they did, did the kids shower together? When I was younger, I thought that was just preposterous. Why would someone do that? I like taking showers alone, but then again, I've never tried those pears. Maybe I'd give up solitary showers for them too. And let's say they went with the other option of just washing the costume. Did they wear the costume while it was drying? Just straight up wearing a soaking wet mammoth costume with your friend because why not?

Last night, mom brought pears home and while I was eating one, I was thinking about this movie all over again. I think that she knew, and I think the children must have been hungry, and without a home. I still don't know about the third one. In the end, the children got a home and a source of food. I'm happy for them, but still confused.

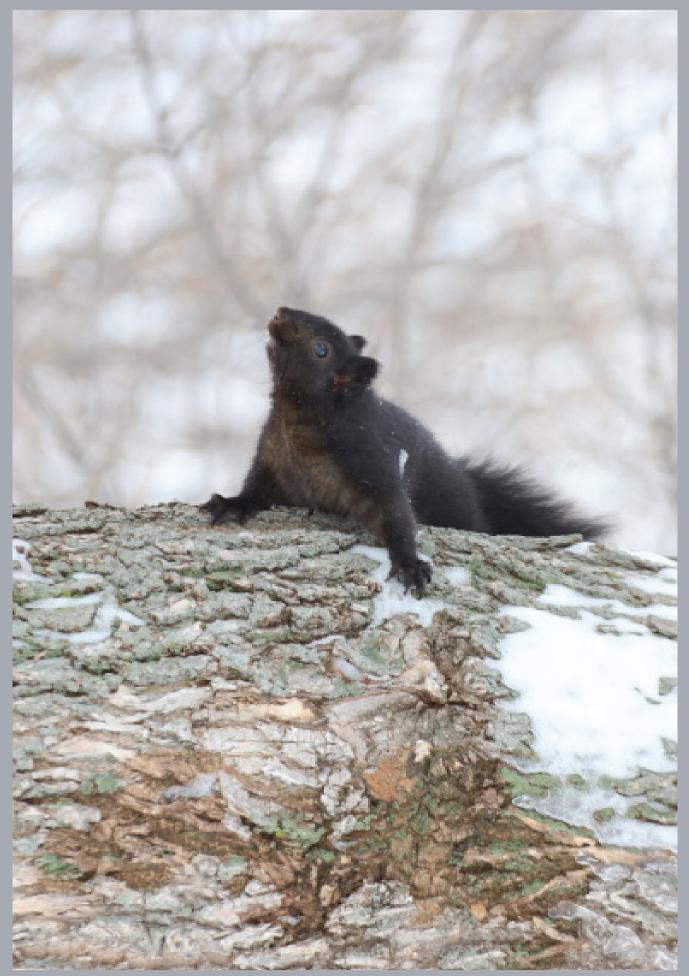


Photo by Allie Weber

#### What happens in a relationship that is only one-sided?

by Emerald Day

The beginning was like no other, hot summer nights felt like fire from the sun burns It felt like a fairy tale Beauty and her beast I told myself you were my soulmate Romeo and Juliet The way you smiled at me made my heart warmer than the sun outside All the inside jokes that would make me laugh till my ribs hurt All the drives around the city getting to know each other from morning till night

One day came after another the weather grew colder Us sitting around playing video games and fighting over who was winning Watching movies and laughing at random times You said it got boring I said I was content Did I bore you?

Maybe it wasn't just the weather that was getting colder Was my company not enough? "Im sorry" "Im sorry" Repeated after another as it rolled off my tongue as you sat there blankly staring The texts got shorter "K" "Sounds good" "Mhm" "Hm"

> The calls became non-existent Declined Declined "Please leave a message at the tone" You said you felt like you were trapped in a box

> > A box?

Mine was a cube Hitting so many corners with nowhere to go Trying to open the walls as you sat there, making them corners again making yourself stuck as I was trying to help Your heart turned colder than the icicles that hung from the gutters on the roof

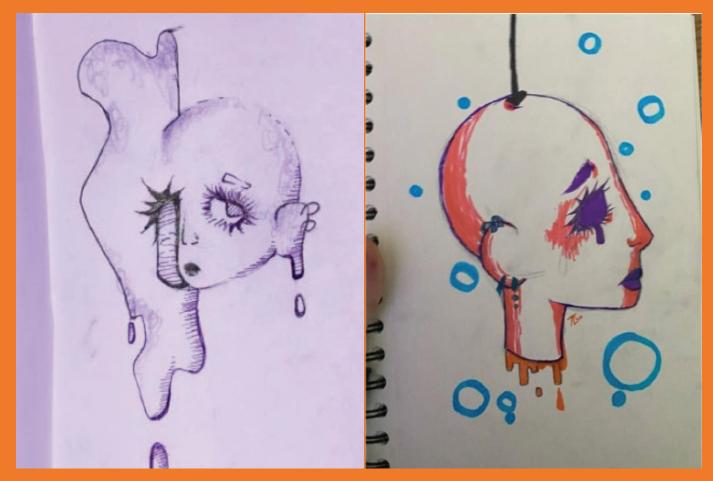
Photo by Baron Martin

### Don't you hate rumors? by Chris Zulu

It spreads like butter on bread	I hate rumors so bad
It only has one mission	Why do people spread rumors to make somebody look bad?
And that's to mess up your rep	Some people get mad
A rumor is as bad as death	Some people get sad
Once it gets in someone's head	But at the end of the day
People start to pretend	You can't listen to what people say
Some people fold	Because rumors aren't safe
Some people bend	It's just a he say she say
But most importantly it spreads	They are as just as bad as a tumor
So, I ask you again, Don't you hate rumors?	Don't you hate rumors?

Photo by Allie Weber





Art by Sabrina Aubuchon

## Sweet guilt

#### -anonymous

The sensational burning with a hint of satisfaction fills throughout my

#### arm.

Blood slowly makes its way down. The pain feels nice, but at the same time horrible. I don't know why I continue to live like this, doing this to myself. Even though it hurts me, the guilt takes over everything. Why do I continue? I feel tears forming in my eyes, I swallow. During the moment, there's nothing. But after.. The guilt is overwhelming. It always leads me back to the same question I keep asking myself-Why do I continue to do this if it hurts so much? "Mother, did you hear about the woman in the woods?

The apothecary that lives in that cottage on her own."

The mother looked at her child with an incredulous look.

"That woman is no apothecary, that woman is a witch.

You'd be wise to steer clear of the forest near the brook."

"Mother, did you hear about the church and what they've done?

They've taken the apothecary in the middle of the night."

The mother justified to her child

"That woman is a witch and she's indulged in black magic.

Tomorrow she will be punished with might"

"Mother, did you hear the church bells ring today?

There's a fire in the square where my friends and I play."

The mother became angry with her child

"I thought I had told you to stay away

The witch has been punished for her crimes against the church."

"Child, did you hear? The fire has spread through town.

Child are you here? We need to leave now."

But the child was long gone

He was not at home or with his friends or in the square

The child was in the forest with the woman in the woods.

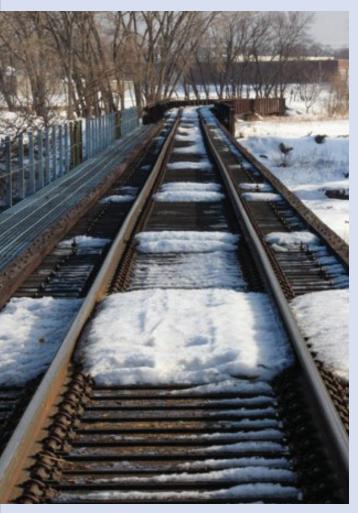
# The Woman in the Woods

### by Maria Davila Rodriguez



Photo by Kyler Lo

# What Would Happen if Death Isn't The End? by Sam Harris



As I lay in the dark cold hospital bed, a warm thought enters my fading mind

"this is it, it's finally over." As my beautiful family crowds around my deathbed,

a deep breath releases from my lungs and I am at peace.

My heartbeat fades away on the wings of death itself and I lie back into the black void.

An electric shock pulsates through my body as my eyes adjust to the world around me. The room is very brightly colored with unknown shapes and colors spilling on the ceiling. The floor feels like warm dirt but it's violently pink.

Human-like hands appear on my shoulder, my eyes travel up its body.

It is unlike anything I've ever seen; the creature has purple skin made of a type of slime and has no limitation to how many arms it can have.

"Give it a second and you'll be fine" It said, in a language, I could understand but didn't recognize. The most enormous creature held out its 3 fingered hands as I drank a clear liquid from its fingertips.

The first creature handed me a bowl of herbs all bright sunset orange.

As I took the bowl my reflection flashed across it revealing my traits.

I look like these creatures in every single way. "do you want to go back in and start another game?"

"I wouldn't mind another" I drank the herbs but before i black out, a creature whispered in my ear "have fun, I'll see you soon"

Photo by Baron Martin



Art by Cecelia Brodkorb

**Summer Nights** by Alanah Gonzalez

The cool night is calm A soft breeze blows through the trees Everything is still Animals are fast asleep Under the stars and full moon



Art by Cecelia Hillyer



Art by Cecelia Brodkorb

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