



WRITING
Where They Are:
REIMAGINING
Rhode Island

An anthology of select new voices

Written by Newcomer Students of Rhode Island
Edited by Giselle Chu
Published by the International Women's Writing Guild 2023

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TABLE of CONTENTS

BABY BLUE.....4

Valarie Aguilar
St. Patrick Academy

WHERE I'M FROM.....5

Racquel Albuquerque
Lincoln High School

BLACK LIVES MATTER.....6

Ivanoskit Fernandez
St. Patrick Academy

HE CAME WITHOUT HIS SCYTHE.....8

Chantel Figueroa Torres
Rhode Island College

ODE TO BOOKS.....9

Chantel Figueroa Torres
Rhode Island College

THE MIDDLE CHILD.....11

Chantel Figueroa Torres
Rhode Island College

ENJOY EVERY LITTLE THING.....12

Hanny Garcia
St. Patrick Academy

WHAT THE OUTSIDERS SAY.....13

Alessandra Gonzalez
St. Patrick Academy

MY FAVORITE PLACE IN MY CITY.....14

Icesiss Harris-Dixon
The Manton Avenue Project

HER AND I.....15

Yarielys Lantigua
St. Patrick Academy

INTO THE REVERSE.....16

Angelina Manzanillo
School One

NICO'S STORY.....18

Emilia Marcotte-Dominguez
Meeting Street School

MY FIRST AND ONLY LOVE.....21

Liliana Martinez
St. Patrick Academy

THE ROLLING STOOL.....22

Brianna Montoya
St. Patrick Academy

MY CITY.....24

Jaylene Moreno
Nathaniel Greene Middle School

ERASING YOU.....26

Claudia Paulino
Rhode Island College

EVIL FAIRIES.....27

Alyssa Pierre
St. Patrick Academy

MY LIFE IN PROVIDENCE.....28

Rosa Rodriguez
Del Sesto Middle School

BLUE.....29

Gabriella Rojas
St. Patrick Academy

THE MISSING GIRL.....30

Amelia Soto St. James
The Hope Academy

UNTITLED.....34

Ariella Soto St. James
The Hope Academy

THE SPECIFICS.....36

Krystal Valentin
St. Patrick Academy



BABY BLUE

Valarie Aguilar

St. Patrick Academy

Life would be nothing without baby blue being present in the daylight sky. Baby blue is the baby of the family of colors. Baby blue is shy, but goes with the flow. In every painting and every picture, baby blue is always there. Most colors rely on baby blue. Whenever baby blue is around, the other colors spark with gratitude. They are grateful that baby blue is there to make the painting come alive. Baby blue is always there to make everyone's day feel innocent like a baby.

WHERE I AM FROM

Racquel Albuquerque

Lincoln High School

I am from the sharp smelling pine trees that circle my house,
From the crashing waterfall that is up my street.

I am from the sweaty soccer cleats and shin guards,
From the bruises that come with the game.

I am from the laughter of kids playing at the playground,
From the creaking sounds of swings.

I am from the yelling and fighting with my siblings,
From the tears that lead to hugs.

I am from cannonballs into the pool,
From the huge splashes they make.

I am from the thrilling days with friends,
From the exhausting sleepovers.

I am from the frustrating nights of homework,
From the long hours of thinking.

I am from the silence of my room,
From the comfort of my bed.

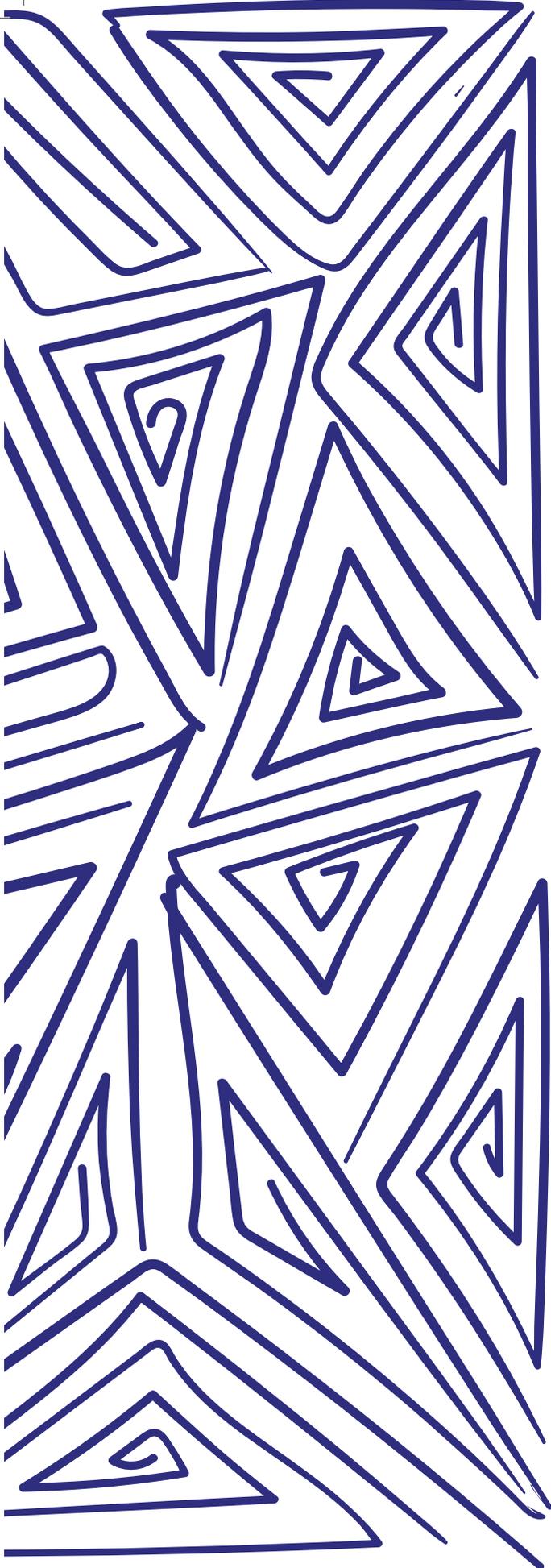
I am from the vibrant colors of acrylic paints,
From the blank canvases to beautiful works of art.

I am from the savory smells of home cooked meals,
From the set dinner table at Nonna's house on Sundays.

I am from these moments,

And wonder if I would be the same without them.





BLACK LIVES MATTER

Ivanoskit Fernandez

St. Patrick Academy

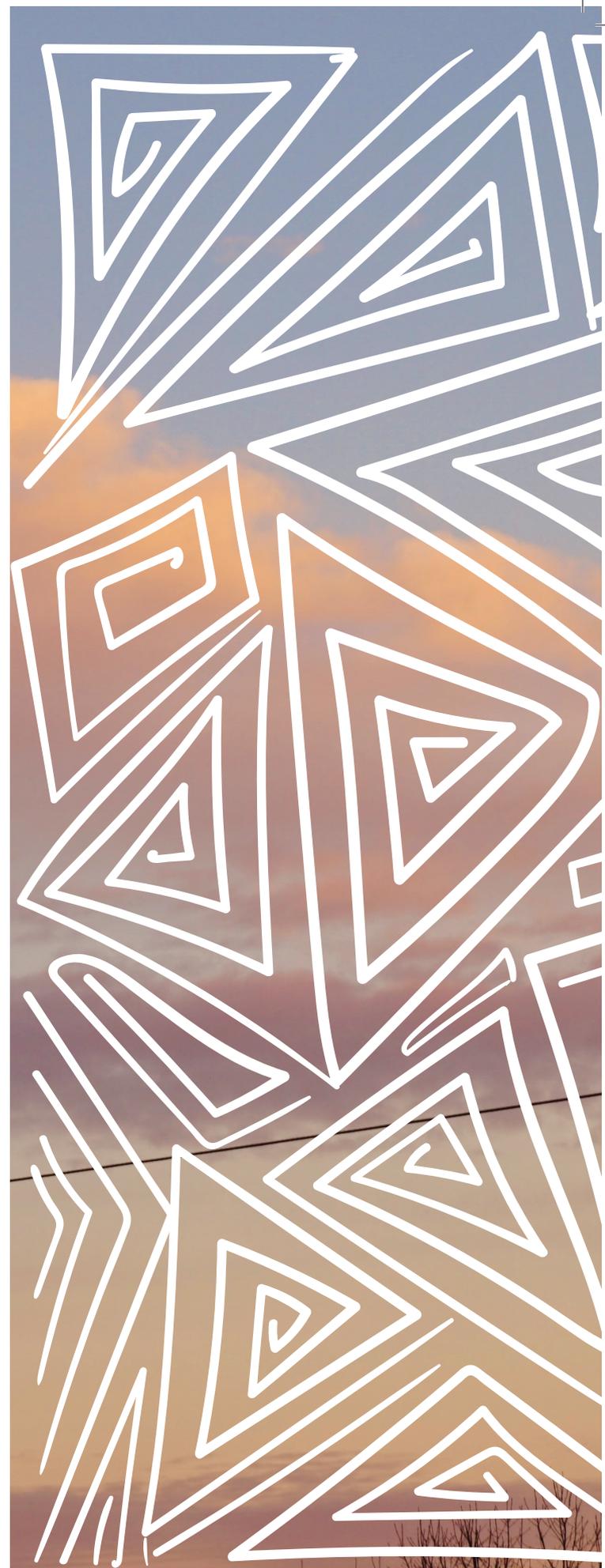
They love to say all lives matter
But turn their heads and move like only their lives matter.
They love to say "that hairstyle is ghetto",
But sit in a chair for hours and get the same "ghetto hairstyle".
They love to say go back to your country,
But never say stay and help rebuild our country.
There's always a report about a white cop killing a black man,
But never a white cop killing a white man.

They love to say they deserved it,
But never sit back and ask themselves did they really deserve it.
It's always "cross the street" when a black person is walking,
But it's always a hello with a smile to a white person walking.,
They love to point out the "thugs",
But never the 4.0 GPA student with a football scholarship to Harvard.
They love to look and laugh,
But never defend and speak up.

Maybe black people should act more peaceful?
Oh wait they did but ended up holding hands and attending funerals,
And getting hit by rubber bullets and pepper sprayed.
It's always sir may you step out of the car
And do you have anything illegal in the car?
It's always will I ever get to see my family again after this police stop,
Or will this stop be a "normal stop"?
Do I have to fear for my life while going on a walk,
Or going to the corner store?
Do I defend my rights and go to jail,

Or not defend my rights and still go to jail?
They love to say "with liberty and justice for all",
But where's the justice,
I don't see it at all.
It's always a white man with mental issues,
And a black man with gun violence issues.
But where was the mental health,
When a white man walked into a school,
With an AR killing people?

Oh wait that's because there was no mental issue,
There was just police worrying about the wrong issues.
But as the black community is getting beat down,
They will stand their ground.
And raise their closed fists and say our lives matter,
And I will stand right with them screaming Black Lives Matter.
And free the caged bird, but that's another battle to fight.





HE CAME WITHOUT HIS SCYTHE

Chantel Figueroa Torres

Rhode Island College

There he stands
in this foreshadowing night.

There against the trees
dressed in his black coat

like freshly fallen snow.

A top hat
that highlighted

That cheeky white smile,

There he stands
a gentleman,
During the day
giving a small smile
and a wave

At night
watching as
the lights go out,
and he pauses,

for me to go in.
Waving goodbye,
For I am his “Lover”

peering through my window

A soulless look in his eyes.

he lurked

and placed upon his head,
fair hair

and contrasted

those red eyes like the frozen blood in my veins.

a demon,

staring through my curtains.

those eyes always following

as he hides in my shadow.

he sticks close by

fear roams down my spine

with a devilish glint

waiting

Leaving me helpless.

sleep escapes me for another night.

[and] he is my Stalker.

ODE TO BOOKS

Chantel Figueroa Torres,
Rhode Island College

My mind fills with a sickening feeling.
There are too many voices
In every corner I turn.
Restricted from entering,
Restricted from leaving.
Clipped wings, trapped in a cage.
I fear losing the little bit of sanity
That remains.

For fear of drowning
I need an escape.
A new place, a new sanctuary.
I go to you.

Walking into our meeting place,
The jingle of a bell announces my entrance.
Waving at the owner, I turn
The next corner and find you
Just where I had last left you.
Placed neatly on the shelf,
Awaiting my arrival.
I run to your open arms,
Finally feeling at ease.





You take me to an enchanted garden.
Where the trees touch the sky
And the river flows endlessly.
You quietly whisper of magical tales and faraway places
As I close my eyes and imagine them myself.

A kingdom of Faeries
Where two queens,
Seelie and Unseelie,
fought
And a King
Had a jester who was mischievous to all the folks.
Tales of living on the moon,
Once the earth was destroyed.

I prefer those stories of magical realms
With beasts, goblins, even
Humans that swim deep on the sea with fins.
I'd much rather be able to slay a dragon
Rather than find the correct formula of love.
How unfortunate that I must depart now.
I awaken from this daydream and
Walk you back to your home.
Tracing your tattered spine with
A name always changing.
Ink smudged and teared pages,
Yellow edges from the turning of someone's thumb.
You are like a soldier, stacked sideways
On a shelf
Waiting patiently,
To be called to duty.

THE MIDDLE CHILD

Chantel Figueroa Torres

Rhode Island College

I am a broken toy
Wedged in the middle with nowhere to hide
Put aside for the youngest
Looked down by the oldest

No repair shop can fix me for
I'm not broken on the outside, but in
My spirit, once sure and strong
Now broken and parting

I am told of things I should not speak
I keep it balled up inside
Awaiting for the day I can deflate
As my parents bounce to me for answers

I am a voyager
Lost at sea with no compass
No wind blowing my sails
Stuck between sea and floor

I am at a forked road
Two paths lay ahead of me
Shall I let the wind gamble my choices
In hopes for the better option?

Shall no one hear my sorrow?
Read the words spilled as ink meets paper?
Shall no one see the tears welling in my eyes?
Taste the drops as they fall?

I have heard many say,
"Things happen for a reason"
But do we really agree?
When one day it will all end

Why doesn't the toy part in two?
The voyager drown?
And the chooser abandon both paths?
The answer was there all along

The younger child is all fun and play
The older child is serious and strict

Now me, the Middle child

May not have seen it first
But am all about what is in between
The two of them
The halfway point

This is my truth
My spirit strong, no longer parting
Awaiting for the wind to push my sails
Taking one step forward and trusting my feet to carry me

For this is who I am
I am the seeker
The one in between
I am the middle child.

ENJOY EVERY LITTLE THING

Hanny Garcia

St. Patrick Academy



A picture frame sitting on top of a shelf.

The wood is painted over with some dark brown color.

It is very old but it has very good memories for my parents.

Once you are older you can not remember things from when you were just a baby.

At least making a prediction about what happened in those baby pictures are enough to make your heart happy.

The background is full of Christmas decorations with the colors red, green, and gold.

Looking back at my old Christmas tree reminds me of all the good happy memories.

Nostalgia overtakes me when I look at my old childhood home, especially in this photo.

Clothes from the 2000s make me want to go back in time.

Times were easier when I was a child

I had no worries.

I appreciate my mom taking care of me and my dad. I am very grateful.

We would just have to look at pictures to bring back memories from the past.

Life keeps moving on.

WHAT THE OUTSIDERS SAY

Alessandra Gonzalez

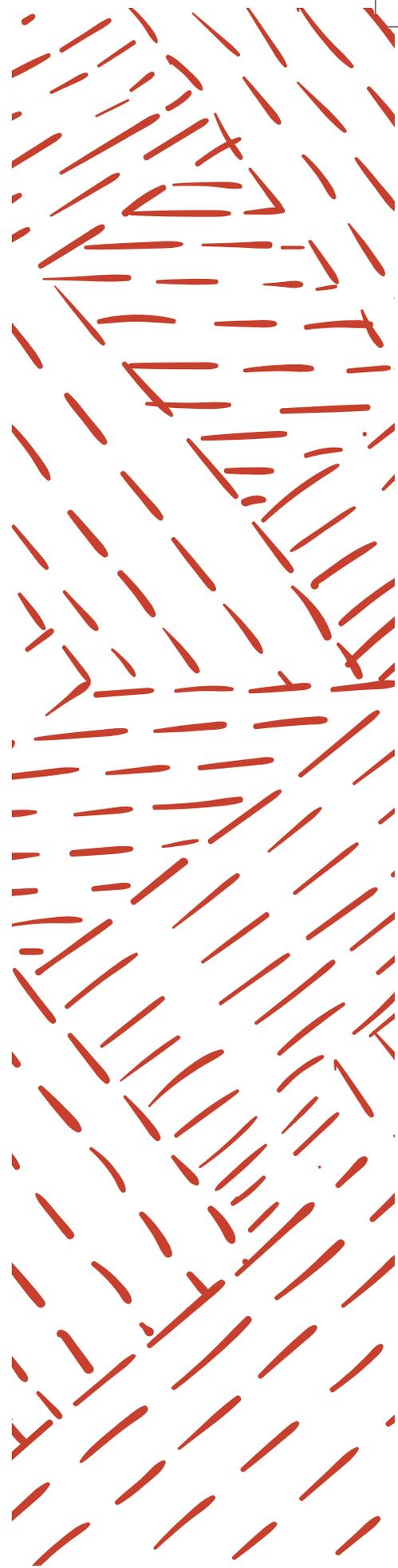
St. Patrick Academy

Those who don't live in Central Falls judge us. We're one of the "ghetto" cities that consists of Hispanics and blacks. Parents tell their children to stay away from kids who live in C.F. What they don't know is that we are nothing like the rumors portray us. They judge us from the outside without knowing what the inside is like. The square mile that people assume is all about violence. We defend our home and show them why we are not what they say we are.

We are a community. Everybody knows one another and treats you with respect. We have many programs that help with the low income. We provide free English classes, open food pantries, and so much more. If one bad thing happens, all the outsiders will think _____ when they hear "Central Falls." The lies prevent them from seeing reality.

The public school in our city is the school with the "bad reputation". They are always being targeted and put down. What they don't talk about is the students who get into Ivy League schools, such as Brown University, and Harvard University, with full rides. The sports teams who have won the championships or the ones who go off to fight for our nation. Just last month, a Burrillville high school team was being investigated for taunting the volleyball team at our public school with racist remarks. There was videographic evidence and yet they were still saying the allegations were not true.

The outsiders have much to say about our small city. We've been judged and criticized, but our square mile continues to push to better our community.





MY FAVORITE PLACE IN MY CITY

Icesiss Harris-Dixon

The Manton Avenue Project

My favorite place in my city is very secretive, and very few people know where it is. When you leave the Clubhouse you make your way to the north highway and you stay on until you see the exit that's named after a part of a tree. If you're right you'll find ice cream. Take two lefts and a right and greatness awaits you. On a calm quiet street you can hear the river flow. You can't see it but I know it's there. When walking down the street I see a dirt opening almost as if it's the entrance to a parking lot. I move the trees to reveal a path to beauty. Only a few steps down a steep hill and a whole new world is revealed. By the river the grass is greener, the sky is brighter and the water is the only noise in range. The stream of water flowing down the hill like a running bath eases my mind. The open field brings me peace. When I'm at the river I feel calm and like nothing else in the world matters.

If you lived in my city you would notice that everyone is somehow connected. My city is so small that everyone knows what you had for breakfast this morning. Living in such a small city can have its perks, us being so small but having a large population. It makes movements in the city very effective. It is easy to spread the word about problems within our communities and makes it easier for everyone's voice to be heard. In my city there is separation but there is togetherness too and when we all stand together there's nothing that we can't achieve. In my city people don't talk enough about the creativity that flows within us. There are a lot of places you can express yourself, whether it's painting murals on buildings or performing in front of an audience. We have some of the most creative minds in my city that have yet to be explored. My city is filled with a lot of small businesses that are branching out because of the support of our communities. I believe that we are tiny but have the power to become as big and bright as Las Vegas, as long as we continue to stay together.

HER AND I

Yarielys Lantigua

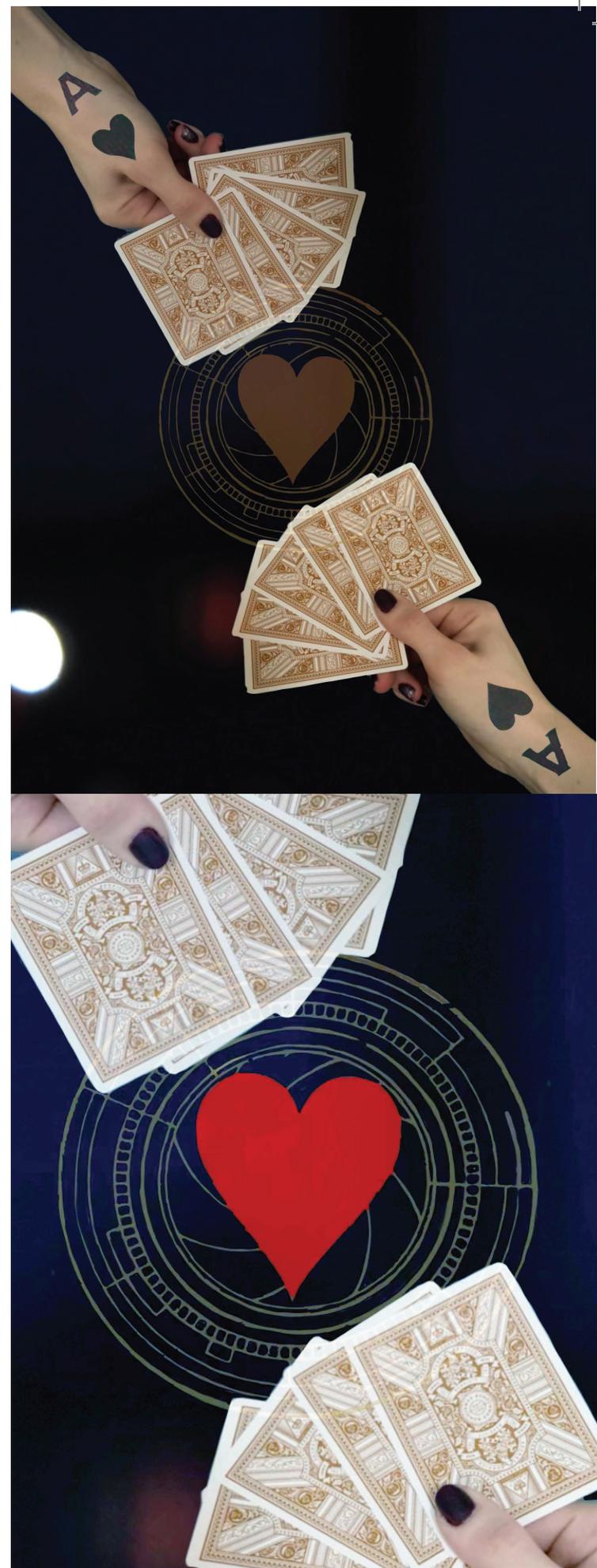
St. Patrick Academy

My grandma and I have a little tradition where we play this card game called 3 y 2 and I've been playing with her since I was 8. A Dominican card game called 3 y 2 basically requires that we each obtain five cards while keeping our decks secret. One card must be face up on the table, and the deck must be placed next to it. Continue drawing cards from the deck until you get three of the same cards and two other cards. Those cards must be identical but distinct from the three. The only drawback is that whenever you take something from the deck, you must always place.

Whoever wins must state "3 y 2" after drawing a card from their stack. For us, this tradition is really important. If it's not with her then I don't like playing with anyone else. Whenever I see a deck of cards, I always think about the battles we have while playing 3 y 2.

Every time she scored I would say, "Mama tu ta siendo trampa." Which translates to "Mama you are cheating." After that she says, "No es trampa, es buena suerte." Which translates to "It's not cheating, it's good luck." She always ends up beating me. So, I make her switch spots with me so I can feel her good luck energy and she tells me "Cambiando lado no va ser nada por que yo como quiera voy a seguir ganando." Which translates to "Changing spots isn't going to make a difference because I'm just going to keep winning either way."

Even if I'm in the lead, for example if I have 7 and she has 5, she always finds a way to get higher than me and always ends up beating me at the game. She has consistently won in all our games, but I don't care because all I want is to spend time with her. She's been in the Dominican Republic, so we haven't played in a while, but when I go in December, I'll definitely play with her as often as she wants.





INTO THE REVERSE

Angelina Manzanillo

School One

It is a sunny Halloween in Fairy Verse. I pull my hood downwards and run through the hills while the cool wind brushes tears from my face. Not too far ahead, I see endless rows of beautiful shades of greens glowing from olive trees. As I get closer, I hear the ancient dance of silent wisdom; branches and leaves rock to the blowing and whistling of the winds.

THUD! Out of nowhere, I trip over a branch of thorns, and fall onto an olive tree stump. Now my hands are wet with pain, and as red as my cape. With my left hand atop the stump, I help myself to my feet, leaving a bloody handprint on what remains of a wise tree. Suddenly, the ground shakes, the rings in the stump separate, and stretch into life-size shapes of honeycomb. I am numb to my cuts and bruises, but I am trembling in fear. In the blink of an eye, voices begin overlapping each other and a tiny light shines, revealing countless windows in time. I randomly glance at the first window and see three pigs building three small houses; one made of hay, another made of sticks, and a different house made of bricks.

“Wait,” I wonder, “what’s that smell?” The sweet aroma of baked cookies and ginger draws my attention to another window. My eyes open in amazement, but I’m in no mood to smile. There stands a boy and a girl picking candies from a sugar house covered with frosting, candy canes, and cookies.

Abruptly, I hear a faint call for help. I notice the window adjacent to it shows a boy holding a stick, and a wolf is running towards him, and he is shouting, “NOOO, A WOLF!”

“Oh Grandma, I couldn’t save you,” I say to myself. Just like that tears reappear. I clench my fists, and with my hand in agony, I punch the vision. The cell starts to grow into a pathway.

“I can enter it, I must save that boy!” Light envelops my body and every inch the light touches slowly vanishes as I enter this new world.

“Help! Help! There’s a wolf trying to eat me! Help!” cries the boy. I see him on a hill with a stick fighting off the wolf. A short distance away, a village of people are working, and I shout, “a wolf is attacking a boy!”

With hope in my heart, I continue to run hard up the hill. Panting from exhaustion, I arrive with a firm branch and slap the ground and distract the wolf's attention away from that poor boy. I mutter, "You will not take another, I won't let this happen again!" The villagers come bolting up the hill behind me like an army of enraged farmers, equipped with axes, hay forks, and torches, scaring the wolf away.

The boy cries, "Thank you, thank you! Who are you red-caped girl? And where did you come from?"

I think aloud, "I somehow ended up here from another world." I whisper to myself, "Wait that sounds crazy," as he gazes at me with confusion.

Before he can speak, the villagers turn to us and one of them says to the boy, "We are so sorry we didn't believe you about the wolf. We thought you were going to play a trick on us again."

"At least I learned my lesson to not tell lies, and thanks to you Red-Caped Girl, I was most certainly going to be the wolf's dinner," he said.

I then see a bright yellow light shooting up to the sky. It's time for me to go home. "We'll go with you so you won't get hurt," said the boy.

"I'll be alright, anyways I'm very close by." All the villagers are waving goodbye as I follow the light which leads me back to good judgment. When I find it, I begin to walk towards the stump and had the feeling to place my left hand on it.

When I did, I saw the bright light swirl around me, lifting me into the air, and I see this world disappearing before me.

Here I am, back in Fairy Verse, facing mirrors of stories in time. I see now, I can reverse endings and after what happened to me; I take this vow, "I'll never let another suffer such a horrendous death." I now wonder which world is next.

To be continued...

This story is dedicated to all the children who were killed in the hands of would-be-wolves. With these fairy tales that end with children getting killed or eaten, I must flip them to show everyone that children should never be exposed to killing or else they'll become the next would-be-wolves.





NIKO'S STORY

Emilia Marcotte-Dominguez

Meeting Street School

"Mama, I don't wanna go!" said Nico.

His mother stayed quiet as she packed his bags. The house's floor flooded over a foot of water after Maria hit the island, and numerous parents were sending their kids to the mainland. He had never been on a plane. He had been nowhere other than his home in Puerto Rico.

Holding his mom's hand, they walk through the airport searching for the boarding gate.

"You will land in Boston. Your Tio will pick you up and take you to Rhode Island."

Nico nodded, even though he had so many questions. Island? Is it an island? He hugged his mom, and the thought that this may be the last time he saw her filled his head.

"The plane will board now."

People started getting up and rushing towards the gate.

"Nico, you're brave. You will love it there, I'm sure."

He waved bye to his mom, tears started forming in his eyes. Why can't he stay with his mom?

"Next!"

The plane smelled terrible. The captain talked, and before he knew it the plane was moving. He felt his ears pop. He didn't know what was happening. After a while, he fell asleep, the sounds of machines lulling him to sleep.

"Please exit the plane in an orderly fashion. Welcome, or welcome back to Boston."

Nico looked around and realized the plane had landed. He grabbed his bag and pulled his phone out of his pocket. Nico had a few texts from his uncle. His eyes opened in shock as he walked off the plane. The airport was giant! He looked around in awe. This place felt surreal. Nico was about to run up to the amazing-smelling store, but he stopped.

The image of his mom came into his head. She would love it here. How come she couldn't come? He can't do it without her. Who is going to take him to school? Who's going to make him Arroz con Gandules? He hates the way the restaurants make it. Tears came to his eyes thinking about his mom. He wanted to sit down and cry in the middle of the airport.

"Nico, you're brave," his mom's voice started talking in his head.

"I need to find my uncle." Nico declared.

Nico walked up to the closest map and looked for the closest pickup lot. After navigating his way through the airport, he found himself at the pickup lot. His uncle had texted him.

“My car is white. I’ll see you soon. What pickup lot are you in?”

“I’m wearing a red hoodie and black sweatpants, also it’s freezing here! How can you live here? I’m going to be a popsicle before you pick me up.”

“You’ll be fine. I don’t even live here. It’s probably colder at the house.”

Colder?! How could his uncle live here? It’s freezing, there are leaves on the floor, and they are all crunchy and brown. His start in the states has so far been freezing and confusing. The wind was hitting his face, the honks of horns, the people talking. It was so much to take in.

“Nico! Over here!” a voice stood out from the others. It was his Tio!

Nico ran over to the white car. He sat down and the heat from the vehicle surprised him. The seat was warm.

“Sorry I was late. There was traffic the whole way here. How was your flight?” his Tio asked.

“It was okay, cramped, but I got to sleep for most of the flight.” he groaned, stretching from being crammed in the plane 30 minutes ago.

The rest of the car ride was his Tio, talking about everything in Rhode Island. Something called Del’s lemonade, Newport, Iggy’s, and coffee milk?

“We’re here! Come on! Your primos are so excited to meet you!” Tio rambled, taking all Nico’s bags out of the car.

The second Nico stepped out of the car, he was cold. He took a breath and wanted to barf. The air smelled like smoke and toxins mixed into one horrible concoction. The steps up to the house were noisy. Before he even opened the door, his two younger cousins, Isabell and Benjamin came running out.

“NICO!” Benjamin and Isabell shouted simultaneously, hugging his waist.

“Woah, Woah calm down,” Nico pleaded, trying to pry them off him. “When did you guys get so big?” He walked into the house, one kid on each leg.

Walking into the house, two dogs greeted Nico, and so did the smell of freshly made rice. Realizing he had not eaten in over 6 hours, he wandered into the kitchen, Isabell, and Benjamin still hanging onto his legs.

“Nico! has crecido mucho!” his Tia Maria said, looking him up and down. “Isabell y Benjamin! ¡quitate de encima! Ahora!”

After getting his suitcases up the stairs, he looked around the room, wishing his mom was there. The room was plain. It had a bed in the corner, a pair of dressers, and a nasty carpet on the floor. He face-planted into the bed that smelled of clean laundry and lavender. The second he feels himself fall asleep, Benjamin and Isabell come running in.





“NICOOOOO come play with us!” Isabell yells.

“Yeah, come on, Nico!” Benjamin follows in after.

Nico has been in providence for a week now. His uncle had taken him all over. He had Del’s and coffee milk. Rhode Island was starting to become his home away from home. Today was Nico’s turn to walk the dogs. He grabbed his coat, his gloves, and his shoes. He walked down the stairs and grabbed the dog’s leashes. The second he touched the leash, the two dogs came running in. As Nico walked out the door, he heard yelling from across the street. It was two guys; they were yelling at each other. Nico just walked right by the two dogs prancing happily down the street.

Walking back to the house, he felt something falling on his shoulder. He looked up and saw snow. The snow falling on him felt so weird. He was just standing there, the heat of his breath making smoke go into the air. Nico had never seen snow before, the way it fell slowly down on his face. He just walked home. The snow is falling all around him, and two enthused dogs are trying to eat the snow.

“Tio! It’s snowing! Look!” Nico exclaimed.

To everyone else in Rhode Island, snow was an annual, annoying thing. Snow leads to ice, ice leads to bad roads, and potholes lead to an annoying car ride. But to Nico, snow was magical. The way each snowflake looked different, the crunch of the snow underneath his feet, the way it looked like a Disney princess movie Isabell had seen.

“Finally, a clean room,” Nico said with a sigh of relief escaping his mouth, landing on a fresh set of clean sheets.

Isabell and Benjamin never give him time to clean his own space, he is too busy cleaning up their messes, but he isn’t mad at them. He could never be mad at them.

Staring up at the ceiling, Nico started to think of his mom. He only got a few texts from her; she wrote that the power is always out and she can never charge her phone for long. He missed her. He loved Rhode Island, but he loved his mom even more. Nico felt a little lost without her here, like a piece of him had been taken away. Prying his eyes away from the ceiling, Nico thought back to the snow. How could he leave this amazing place? He has various opportunities here; he has an amazing school and friends, he can have a life here, go to college and make his mom proud. He thought of his house in the mountains, his chickens, the stray dogs, the long days, all the loud music, and riding in the backs of pickup trucks. Tears started to flood his vision. He did not know what to do.

Nico stood up and walked downstairs.

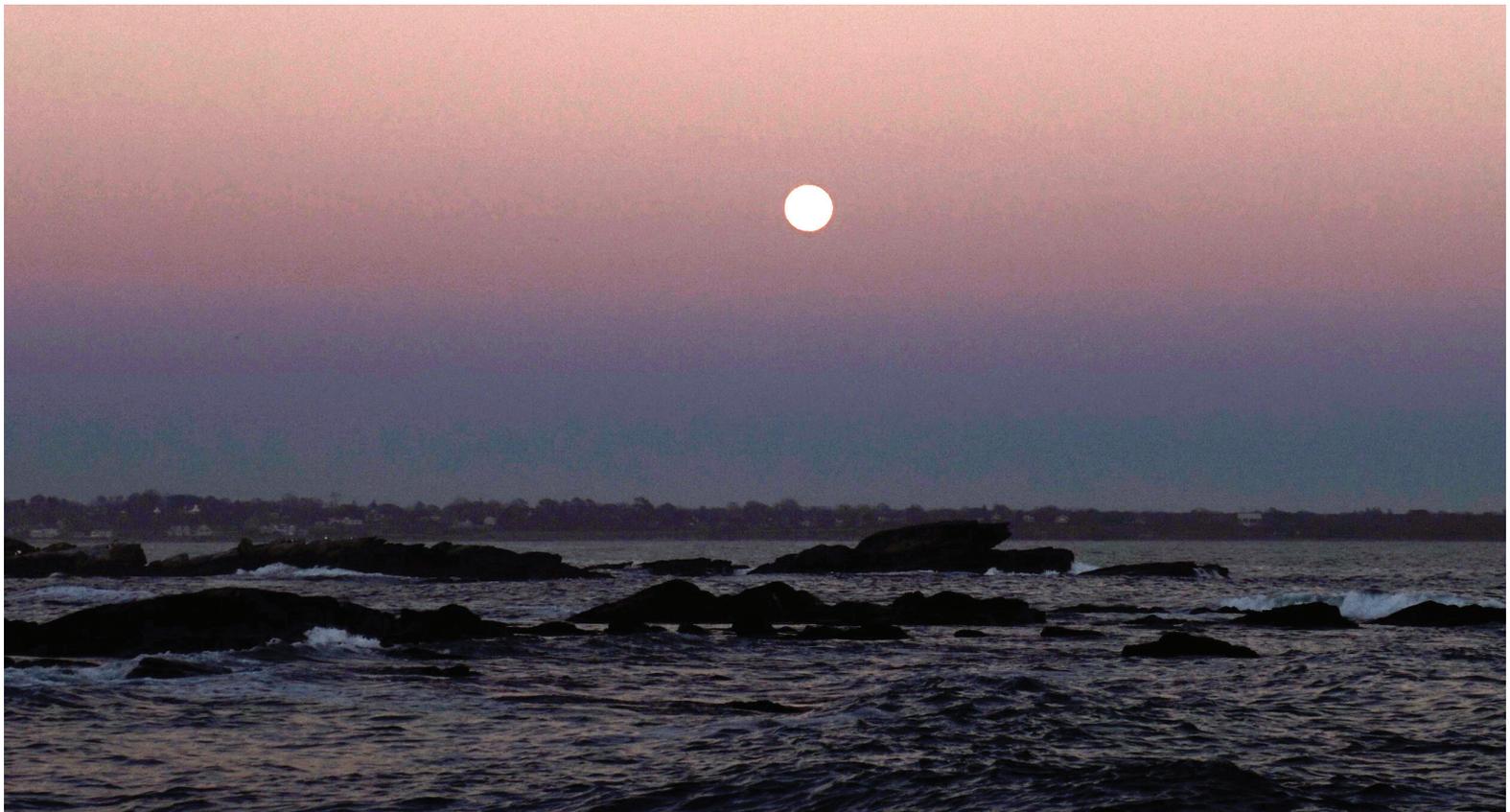
“Tio, I think I’m gonna...”

MY FIRST AND ONLY LOVE

Liliana Martinez

St. Patrick

My eyes met his eyes, his eyes met my eyes
his fingers met my fingers, my palms met his palms,
His wrist leaned into my wrist, to relax at the same moment,
I swear he was in love with me, the way he would relax his eyes on me,
I swear he wanted to spend the rest of his life with me,
I swear he told me he loved me,
I swear he said I was his first and last love,
But It was all just a lie,
the way he caressed my body,
the way he ran his fingers through my hair,
the way he would whisper in my ear “I love u”, has left me feeling like a white
shiny feather that has been left behind by a gorgeous swan.





THE ROLLING STOOL

Brianna Montoya

St. Patrick Academy

I still remember that day so vividly. As I stepped foot out of the house, a feeling of oddness hit me straight in the face. The sky seemed grayer than usual, the air was thick and moist, and there were no signs of life; it was just me and Chestnut Street. I tried to shake off this weird feeling, but the more I tried to ignore it, the more aware I became of my surroundings. Just ten minutes before being out in the open, me and my best friend, Valeria, had arranged to meet at her house. We never knew what we were going to do, but that's what made playing together so exciting.

Our houses were on the same street, so it was only a minute's walk. Valeria was already sitting on her front porch when I arrived. We exchanged hugs and immediately started to brainstorm what we were going to do. We weren't in the mood for gymnastics, doing crafts, or making up a dance to later "impress" her mother; there just seemed to be nothing to do. And so, we started to snoop in her garage. It was cluttered with tons of junk like baseballs, shovels, and even a porcelain gnome dressed in a bikini. After digging in this jungle for what seemed like hours, we found exactly what we needed: the rolling stool.

It was perfect. We decided that one would lay on their back and the other would push the stool from the garage to the driveway. First it was Valeria, then it was me, and we continued to do this same rotation until we figured it'd be enough. However, we were wrong to think we would be the ones to decide when we should stop. When it was my turn again, Valeria began to push and speed up. It all happened so fast. One of the pedals from the stool hit a bump on the ground causing me to fling forward right into the pavement. As my body sunk into the ground, I found myself admiring the sky for what felt like a while. I don't know why I ever thought the sky looked gloomy, it looked rather beautiful with splashes of gray. The sky's enchantment wore off when I heard Valeria weeping. I was confused. I was the one who fell off the stool, yet she was the one crying.

When I got up from the hard pavement, Valeria and I started to go back and forth like a broken record. She kept apologizing and I kept reassuring her that I was fine. She signaled for me to look at my reflection in the car window. I walked over and my heart dropped. My forehead was covered in blood and bits of skin were peeling from the center. I looked like a walking zombie. At that moment, I knew I could not let Valeria see my true reaction. I did not want her to feel as guilty as she already felt – it had been an accident. So, I acted like I was fine. I told her it didn't even hurt, which was not a lie, but I think it was because of the adrenaline numbing the pain.

We both agreed it was better for me to go home. We said our goodbyes and the moment I turned my face away from hers, my true feelings emerged onto my face. Tears began to drop one after another. My breathing became uneasy from the fear that told me I was not okay. The moment I stepped back into my house, I completely broke down. The tough act I was putting up in front of my friend was gone. My parents rushed over and were as shocked as I was. They did lecture me, but also comforted me on the ride to the hospital. Although I was diagnosed with a minor concussion, it wasn't as bad as it seemed. It turned out I could miss a week of school AND stay in pajamas. What a dream come true.

To this day, my blood and skin are one with the city's ground. Who would have known that it's possible to physically be a part of Central Falls forever?





MY CITY

Jaylene Moreno

Nathaniel Greene Middle School

My favorite place in the city is Roger Williams Park and Zoo and my first memory of this place is my cousin's birthday and all of my family went there. My brothers were racing, and me and my cousin were throwing rocks into the lake. After playing we all had a picnic with very delicious food. The food was smelling good, the picnic blanket was very soft, the nice summer breeze was blowing through my hair and the water was moving very calmly. It was a great time down there at the park. I was feeling very happy with all of those summer colors that I saw all around me.

To get to this location from the Manton Avenue Project Clubhouse is not that easy but it is a fun adventure. You must get there by car to make it easier. You pass by streets that sometimes have traffic and then go onto a highway where all of those cars go fast; you'll pass by some stores and even a small lake. When you get off the highway, you will turn left, and then right to enter the park. It is a huge park so you can park anywhere and start your adventure as you get out of your car.

On my cousin's birthday, my parents took us to the temple of music. It is one of my favorite places because as you get out of your car, you see a big hill and I like to have fun so me and my cousin ran down the hill to the steps of the temple. The food that my dad brought was Chinese food and it was very good. As I was eating, I saw all these summer colors of blue in the sky and on the water, shades of green around the trees and the grass, and white in the white fluffy clouds and for the temple of music. The temple is very majestic because as you look at it you feel like you are in the ancient times and it is just beautiful.

In my city, people don't talk enough about climate change. If I were mayor of my city, I would fight for climate change, a cleaner environment, and no violence. With all of those things fixed, my city can be a landmark for all of the U.S.! Travelers would love to visit here and the city would be cleaner. Since there will be no violence, my city will be one of the safest in the whole state. It would also be pretty nice to see a cleaner river that runs through the city.

If you lived in my city, you would notice the statehouse.

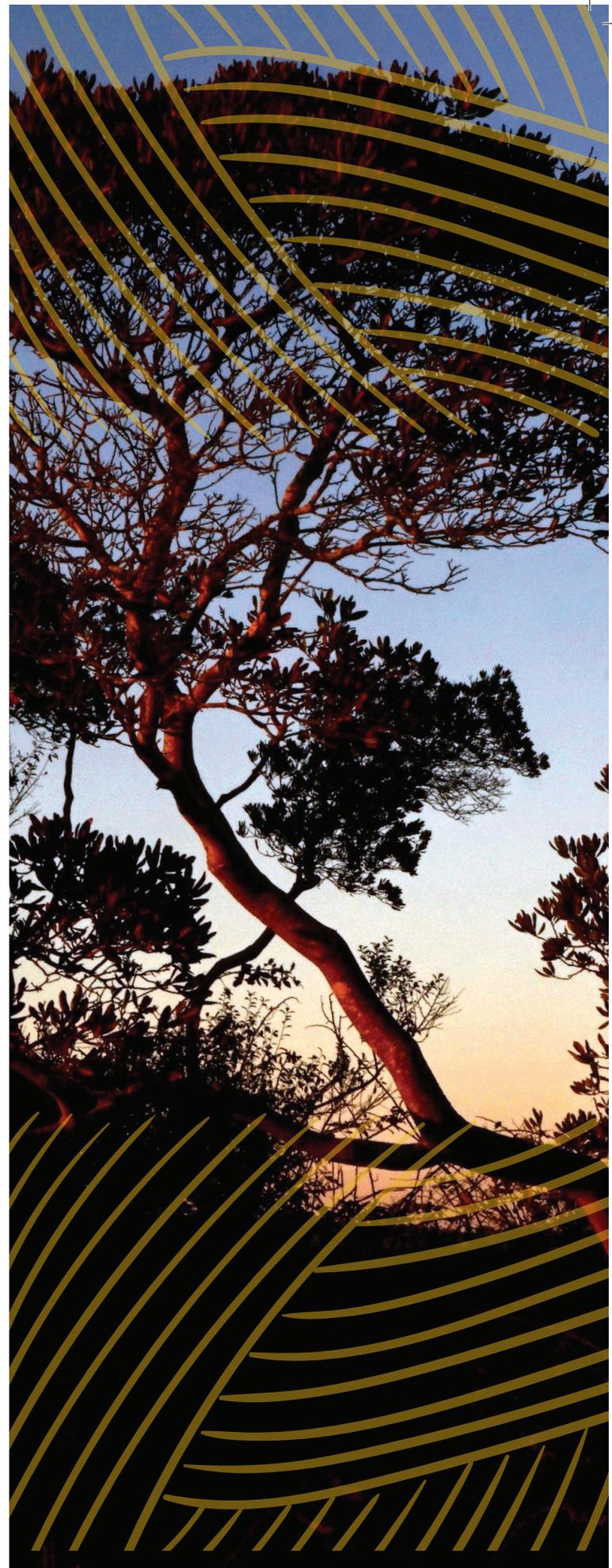
If you lived in my city, you would notice the ice cream truck coming at 3 p.m. every day.

The place that I am happiest smells like my mom's cooking.

The place that I am happiest sounds like raindrops falling and birds chirping.

The place that I am the happiest tastes like candy.

The place that I am the happiest feels like home.





ERASING YOU

Claudia Paulino

Rhode Island College

Words, endless pages of words

The only sight of a “me” and “you”

Ended up being just another story of two

Nothing special, nothing new

If it would help to re-word

Maybe blur,

Stir,

Spur,

If erasing the “you” would do just that

Remove you from my mind, my life

The small, yet bothersome “hi’s”

I wouldn’t think twice about putting my pencil down

And with pen, continue to write

EVIL FAIRIES

Alyssa Pierre

St. Patrick Academy

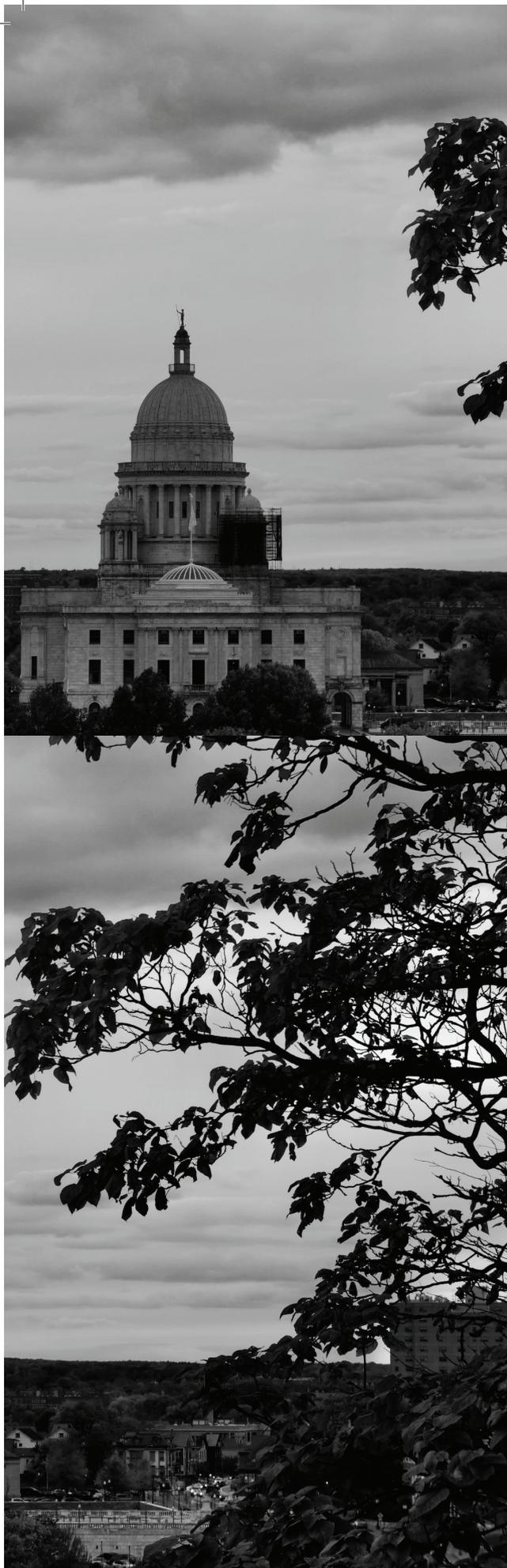
Let me tell you about the evil fairies in Rhode Island! They are everywhere in Rhode Island; located in every wood. They live in very small cabins to sleep and hide food and other resources. Around their cabins, there are always trees that stand still and then walk to guard the cabins. They will poison anyone who trespasses around their home. The trees are very cold and tall. If you were to trespass, bring a flash to blind them, food, sleeping bags, and a tent. The evil fairies come in the night. They do not like the sun, or anything bright. Anything bright could blind and burn them. They eat blueberries for energy so they do not become weak. If they become weak, they could die.

Evil fairies can transform themselves into anything they want such as a human or animal. Be careful who you talk to online or in person. They could be the evil fairies trying to lure you to their cabins and you'll never come back.

If the evil fairies were humans, they might ask, "Can you help me find where the woods are?" That's when you know, you should run.

Just reply to them, "I am busy, I don't have time". Then, walk away. If they beg, tell them to use a GPS to navigate. Play smart with them. If they were an animal trying to come towards you for help, be careful. Call animal control! If an evil fairy comes to your house or anywhere you live during the night, do not open the windows, it can attract more. Find a bright flashlight and try to blind them and kill them. Make sure you wear a suit and gloves to protect yourself so no poisonous juice touches you. Never visit the evil fairies.





MY LIFE IN PROVIDENCE

Rosa Rodriguez

Del Sesto Middle School

If you lived in my city, you would see lots of amazing neighborhoods with kind people. In my city, they don't talk enough about how nice people are, because they like to judge people without knowing how that person can help make a big change with just a little.

I like to do my homework in my bedroom at night when I know that everyone is in their bedrooms so that I can put both my air pods in. I like to sit and think after finishing my work about some of my future decisions. I overthink about changes I want to do for the future. I'd rather get in touch with my goals and not with toxic people that will try to change my mind.

If I were mayor of my city, I would fight to stop violence.

During the pandemic, I spent most of the time in my house, in the living room watching TV and hanging out with the members of my household. I also learned new things with them. My favorite place in the city is my room because I get to watch shows with my little brother and play. My room has two beds since I share it with my niece. We have a wardrobe and a closet. My sheets are blue and gray. I listen to my music. When I look around, I see a painting of a unicorn as if it was done by a professional.

I'm looking forward to meeting my goals for a better future. I say this because I want to give a nice life to my little brother, who will need me a lot.

The place I feel happiest feels like a break from stressing about things.

The place I feel happiest sounds like birds chirping.

The place I feel happiest is the park.

The place I feel happiest smells like nature.

Just breathing a little, I can smell the flowers as if they were on me. Also it's like there is every kind of plant surrounding me.

BLUE

Gabriella Rojas

St. Patrick Academy

Blue is represented as boy
most of the time.

It's seen as sad, lonely,
depressed and brokenhearted.

People experience the blue sky
and feel like their spirit has been
lifted and lifted with peace.

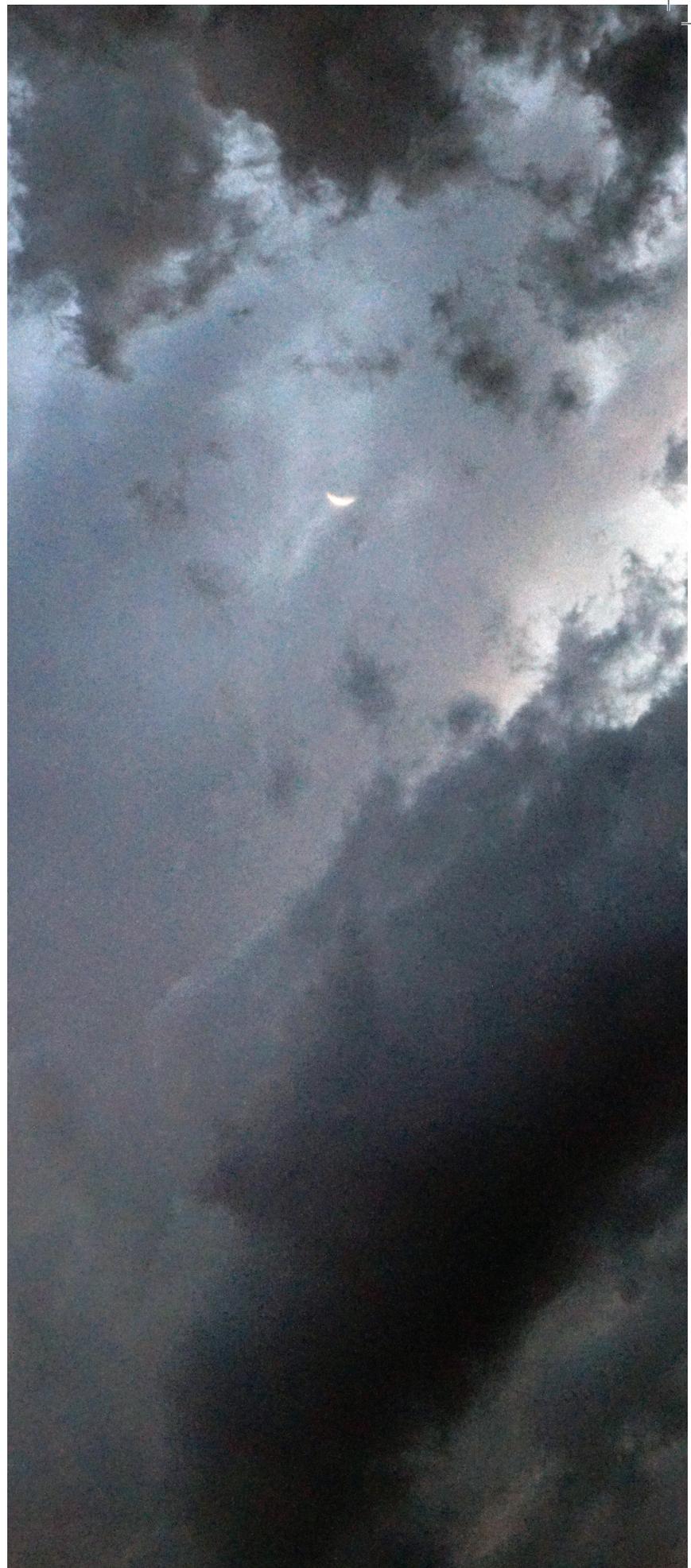
When I see blue I think of nature and
how happy it makes me.

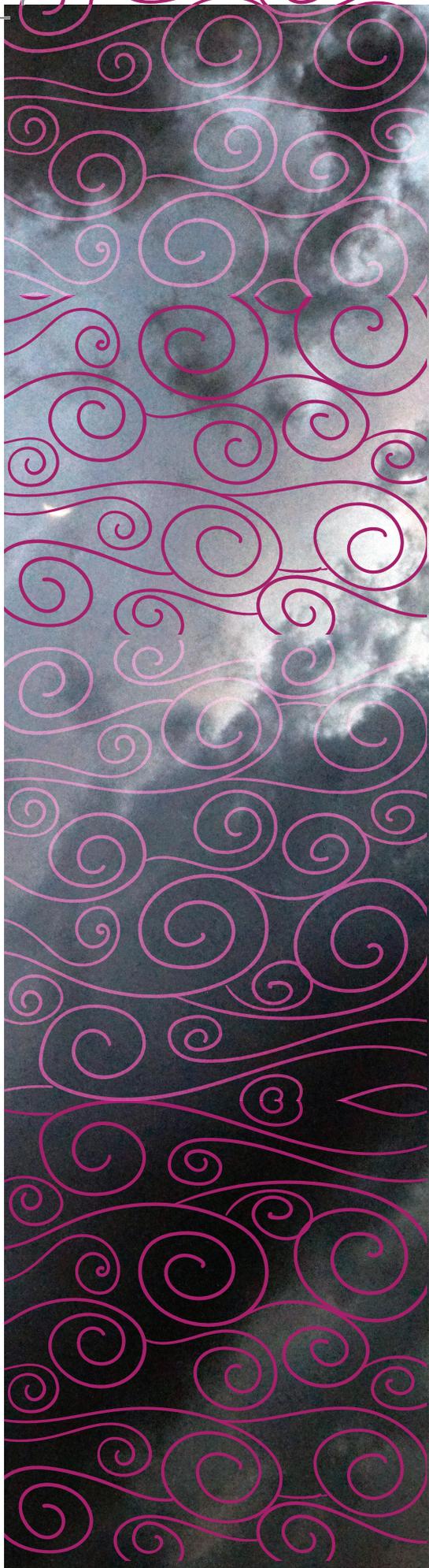
I do not feel sad and I do not see
it as a boy thing.

I see it as a boy and girl thing.

Blue should not be characterized.

Blue is a beautiful color and it shows
life's most beautiful moments.





THE MISSING GIRL

Amelia Soto St. John

The Hope Academy

Ding-dong. “Oh Hi Mr. and Mrs. Stoll.”

“Hi, are you guys some of Ryan’s friends?”

“Yeah, my name is Lia, and this is Ashlee.”

“Well, he’s in his room, you can go right up. Umm, Lia, you can go upstairs, I just need to have a little word with Ashlee. You can come and sit at the table. Ashlee, I don’t want you to cause any trouble, because I know you aren’t the best example for my son, but since he’s your friend, I’ll let it go. Now don’t do anything stupid—sorry, dumb. You may go now.”

Okay, that was weird, can’t wait to tell Lia and Ryan about this.

“Hey, Ryan.”

“Hi Ashlee.”

“I’m sorry I have to tell you this but, I don’t like your mom, and I think she doesn’t like me. She was saying things like, I’m a bad example for you, and that she doesn’t want me causing any trouble, and that was weird.”

“So, Ashlee if I ask my mom if she said that, she will say yes?”

“Yeah, you know I wouldn’t lie about something like that.”

“Okay, let me go ask her.”

“Mom?”

“Yes, Ryan?”

“I have a question for you, did you tell Ashlee that you think she’s not a good example for me, and not to cause any trouble for me?”

“No. I would never say something like that to Ashlee. Ryan, I’m telling you the truth, she’s lying.”

Okay well, that was a little weird.

“Okay Ryan and Ashlee, we should spend the day doing fun things because it’s Sunday and we have school tomorrow.”

“Okay, let’s get ice cream, it’s a hot and beautiful day out, the sun shining at its heights, not too hot or cold, with a nice breeze, so let’s get some ice cream, Ryan

and Ashlee.”

“Oh, there’s an ice cream shop around the corner. Mom, Ashlee, Lia and I are going to get some ice cream.

“Okay, just don’t take so long.”

As Ashlee and I were leaving the house Ryan’s mom gave me a weird smirk that gave me the jitters. Okay well, that was weird.

We’re here at the ice cream shop. Tricycle Ice Cream.

“I’m going to get vanilla ice cream with chocolate chip cookie dough and strawberries on top.” Lia said loudly and proudly.

“Ok, Lia, you can go up and order what Ryan told you. Ashlee, what do you want?”

“Just plain vanilla ice cream.”

“Alright, Ryan, what are you getting?”

“Chocolate ice cream, with whipped cream.”

“Okay, will that be all for today?”

“Yes.”

“Okay well, have a good day!”

“You too.”

“Ryan,” Ashlee said, “don’t you think that it was a little weird how your mom was acting and that she lied to you, because didn’t you say that she never lies to you?”

“Yeah, that was a bit weird.”

Speed walking with her ice cream melting down her hand, Lia tells Ashlee, “I didn’t tell you this before but, when we left the house, I did see her give you that weird smirk.”

As Lia, Ashlee, And Ryan ate their ice cream, they all thought that something was up, something big and bad was about to happen, but they kept their mouths shut.

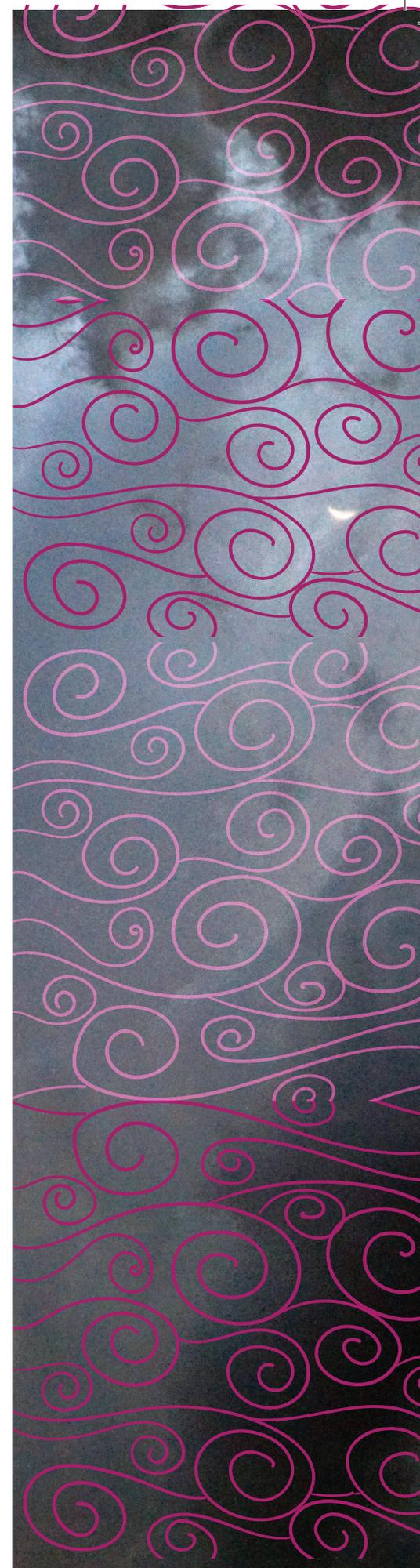
“Wait, Lia and Ryan, do you see those clouds coming in, from out of nowhere? That’s so weird, the weather was supposed to be perfect today.”

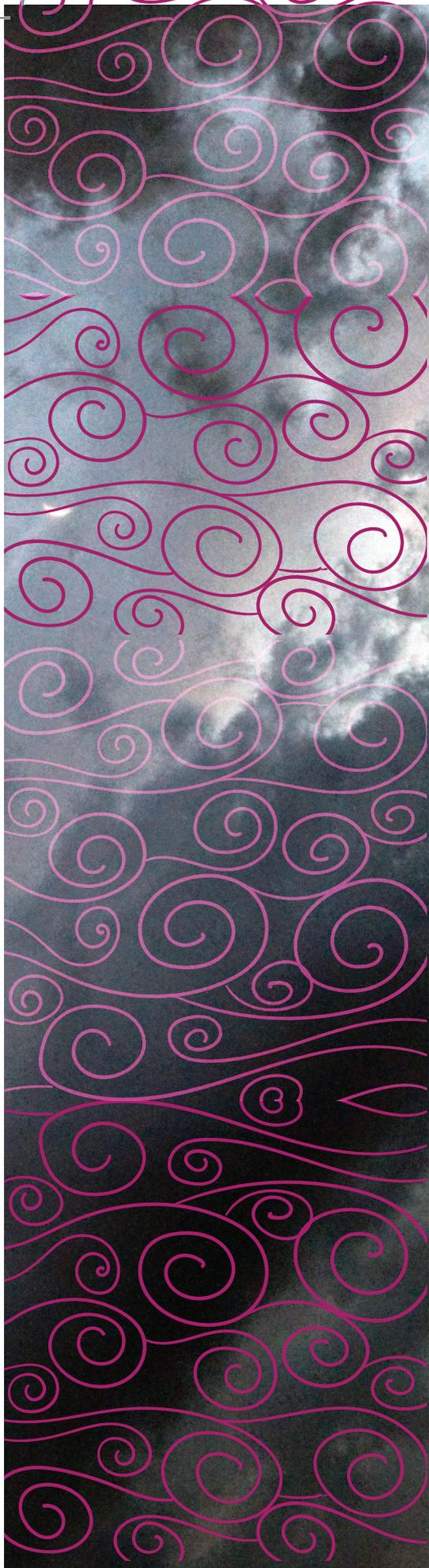
“Yeah Ashlee,” Ryan said.

Drop-drop-drop.

“Do you feel that?”

“Yeah Ashlee, it’s raining and it’s getting harder.”





Dash went Lia, Ashlee, and Ryan sprinting down the street as fast as they could trying not to get soaked in the rain.

“UHHHH! We’re finally here. it feels like we’ve run like 5 miles, and when we were running it was like the house was getting further and farther away.” Lia said, trying to catch her breath, and all three of them looked like their legs were about to give out.

“Oh my, you guys looked messed up”.

While Lia was struggling to go over there, she stopped mid-step, looked down, and said, “Oh my goodness, Ryan, Ashlee, look down at the floor, do you see the mess that we’ve made!!!! Oh my, we’re so sorry, we’ll clean it up.” Lia said, frequently giving us hand signals to get up and get to cleaning.

“It’s alright, I’ll clean it up.”

Ashlee and Lia said, “Thank you Mrs. Stoll,” and Ryan said, “Mom.”

After that, Ashlee and Lia went back home to their houses.

The next day

Meanwhile at Ryan’s house he woke up in the middle of the night and got out of bed to use the bathroom when he heard his parents talking. So, he went down the stairs as quietly as he could so his parents wouldn’t hear him.

“We haven’t got much time to do it, we have to do it the next time she comes here, or it will be too late.” Ryan hears his mom whisper to his dad. And then he went back to sleep confused with millions of questions in his head.

Bom-Bom-Bom “Open up, we’re gonna be late for school!” Lia shouted at the top of her lungs. “We even made the bus wait, Ryan, hurry up!”

“Oh my God, I slept in!” Ryan quickly put on the first pants he saw and grabbed a shirt from the floor, brushed his teeth, and five seconds later he was done. He ran out of the house ready to get on the bus, until his friends stopped him, telling him he had forgotten his backpack.

“Okay, let’s go.” All three of them rushed on the bus and apologized to the bus driver for keeping him held up.

“Hey, Lia and Ashlee, there’s something that I need to tell you. Last night I was going to the bathroom when I heard my parents whispering, so I quietly went to the stairs to hear them, and I heard them say, ‘We haven’t got much time to do it, we have to do it the next time she comes here, or it will be too late.’ And I have a million questions like, who is she, how much time do they have left, and when do they come to my house?”

“Okay, Ryan, that’s some new info we can talk about after school.”

“Why after school and not now?” Ryan asked Lia.

“Well, maybe because we’re the last ones on the bus, and at school.”

“Oh, yeah, talk later.”

After school

“Hi, you guys you have a good day?” Ashlee asked Ryan and Lia.

“Yeah,” they both replied.

“Oh, Lia and Ashlee, do you guys want to come over to my house to talk about the thing?”

“Sure,” they said.

“Oh, we’re here,” Ryan said until he saw a white van in front of his house and the front door wide open. Ryan ran off the bus like a cheetah, with Ashlee and Lia at his tail right behind him.

“Wait, we don’t know what, or who’s inside,” Ryan said, trying to be bold. “Mom dad are you in here?”

“Yes sweetie, in the kitchen.”

Ryan, Lia, and Ashlee slowly walked into the kitchen, and saw Mr. and Mrs. Stroll holding three sack bags, two rolls of duct tape, and three chairs. The next thing they know is that they are all taped to a chair with sack bags over their head.

The kidnap

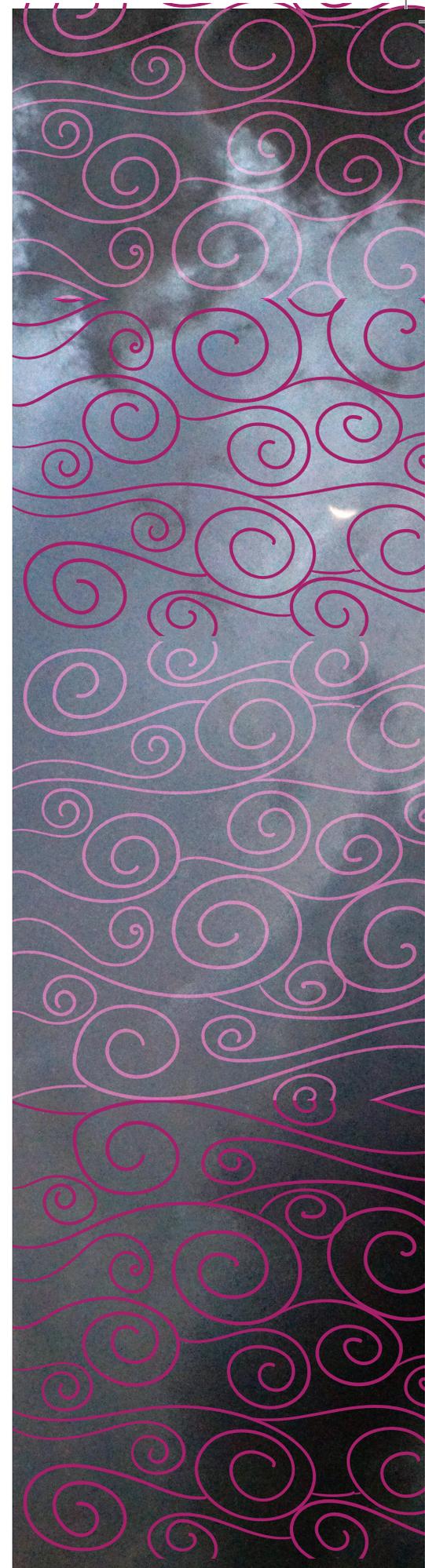
“Lia, Ashlee, are you here?”

“I’m here,” Lia said.

“Wait then where’s Ashlee?” Ryan shouted. “Ashlee, if you’re joking around, stop, this is not funny!”

“Ryan she is not here, so let’s just figure out how to get the duct tape and this bag off.”

Meanwhile, while Lia and Ryan were trying to get out of their situation, Ashlee was trapped in the back of a large white van, knocked out, going to the conjuring haunted house! The house is in Rhode Island at 1677 Round Top Rd, Burrillville, 02830.



UNTITLED

Ariella Soto St. John

The Hope Academy

It was an afternoon around 12:00 when I got kidnapped. My name is Katey and I was at the frozen yogurt shop ordering a frozen yogurt. I ordered cookies and cream with gummy bears, chocolate chips, strawberries, sour patch kids, and some Hershey's chocolate drizzle on top. I was so excited to eat my frozen yogurt. The smell of the cookies and cream was so good that I felt like I was already eating it. I could see all of the toppings; I could also hear the worker using a spoon to gather the toppings. I could see the girl touching the cup/container. The girl that worked at the frozen yogurt shop was finally done putting my toppings onto my frozen yogurt, so that was when I looked around the shop, not walking around but just moving my head, and I saw this sketchy guy. (A guy that looked kind of creepy). I tried to ignore it, so I decided that I was going to pay for the frozen yogurt really fast and get into my mom's car that was waiting for me outside. I was getting my money from my purse when it happened. That sketchy guy I was talking about, the one that looked like a weirdo, got up from his seat and started creeping over to me. I was trying to not look at him and give the money for the frozen yogurt really fast, but that's when he pulled out a gun.

He told everyone, "Put your hands up or I'll shoot you all right now. Hey girl over there paying for your frozen yogurt, what's your name?"

"Katey."

"Give me your phone."

"No, who do you think you are, thinking that I will just give you my phone. You must be stupid or something, you weirdo."

That is when the creepy/sketchy guy used his gun and shot a bullet one centimeter from my shoe.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA HHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! What the heck! Were you about to shoot me?"

"Yes, I was," the guy stated angrily. "Now take thirteen steps forward if you want to live any longer than today."

"O-okay j-just p-please don't shoot me or anyone else that is here."

"Fine, just hurry up."

Finally, it felt like you had been walking for a century.

"Now come with me."

The frozen yogurt workers were panting and freaking out, worrying, and thinking about what was going to happen to Katey.

Me and the creep walked out of the frozen yogurt shop and then arrived at his car. The car was black with silver wheels. I looked into the back seat and that was when I saw it. A briefcase. It looked like there was something sticking out of it, and it was green. At first, I had absolutely no idea what it could be, but when I took a closer look, I saw it. I

was a one-hundred-dollar bill. That was also when the creep unlocked the car doors and pushed me inside of the car.

I was really confused that the guy didn't tie me up, and that made me start thinking this guy is not a pro. I bet he has never done this before. That was an advantage of mine. That's when the guy started his car. The car was moving at sixty-five mph, that was the speed limit, so then he wouldn't look suspicious. That's when I also decided to open the briefcase. It was full of one-hundred-dollar bills. It was unbelievable. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. All of a sudden the car started moving very fast. I checked what the car speed was at, and it was at eighty-five mph. That was very fast. That's when I spotted a rope, and an idea came to my head. I'm going to strangle this creep and jump out of the car.

After I decided that I was going to do that, I was like, first I have to find out this guy's name to report him to the police and then try to slow down the car.

"What's your name?"

"John James Willson."

"Can I have my phone back?"

"Well sure, I guess."

Brahh, you're so stupid, is what I said in my head. When John gave me my phone back I went into the voice recording app and started asking John questions.

"John?"

"What?" John responded.

"Why are you kidnapping me?"

"Why do you care," John responded in an annoyed way.

"You probably never thought of this but if you think about it, maybe why I would want to know is because you are kidnapping me! So, hurry up and give me an answer."

"Well, I got bored one day (that was today) and I wanted to know how it would feel to kidnap someone. Eventually, I saw you and you looked like an easy one. So, I made sure that I had my distance and started stalking you once you left your mom's car."

"Okay, one more question. Why do you have a briefcase full of hundred-dollar bills?"

"That's because I robbed a bank before I came here."

"That's all I wanted to know." That was when I ended the voice recording. Also, that was all I needed to report this horrid crime to the police. It was like thirty seconds later I picked up the rope with one hand and put the rope around John's neck and started to choke him. As I was choking him, he was trying to say 'stop, stop, stop, I can't breathe.' That was when he started to use his hands to try to get the rope off him. John almost got the rope off when I put my foot on the back of his seat and used my arm strength to pull even harder. It worked. All that happened was that he was knocked out. Now was my chance to get out of the car. At this point the car was not on the highway it was on the street. I grabbed the briefcase, and my phone, unlocked the door and opened the car door.

The car was still going fast, and I started to get scared, but I told myself that I could do it and I sprung myself out of the car (jumped out). All that happened was that. The worst thing that happened was that I scraped my knee badly but not bad enough that it would be sprained or broken.



THE SPECIFICS

Krystal Valentin

St. Patrick Academy

She told me
On a rainy day
Her favorite color
Was blue.
But what did that mean,
How much of it was true?
When she said blue
Did she think
Of the rain
That fell
Like it did that day?
Could she have meant
The blue of the sky,
But then was it day or was it night?

Did she love
The baby blue
That decorated
Auntie's baby shower
For little baby you?
Or did she fancy
The pretty peacock
And its lovely hue?
It is driving me crazy,
How was I supposed to know?

Well, what about
The blue of
The murky depths of
The water of
The ocean?
Perhaps it could be
The aquamarine scales
That cover
The mermaid tails.

Maybe it is the color
Of my
Lucky
Lapis
Lazuli?
Or of the
Sparkling sapphire
That she gifted me
All those years ago.

Oh, it might just be
The deep navy
That made up
My old school uniform.
Maybe the soft
Comfy denim
Of her favorite
Old ripped jeans.

I suppose
I will have
To be okay
With knowing
That I will never know
What type of blue
She truly loved the most.

ABOUT IWWG

The International Women's Writing Guild (IWWG) was founded in 1976. From the beginning, we've represented women from many backgrounds. When the Guild was founded, we created a place where all women writers feel welcome, inspired, and empowered by skills, resources, and mentoring. IWWG launched its mentorship program in 2020, working with our first cohort of fellows from Boston, New York, and Tampa to write anthologies and lesson plans about social, racial and health equity. In 2022, with funding from the Nellie Mae Foundation, we launched our Newcomers writing program in Rhode Island, partnering with Write Where You Are. – **Michelle Miller, Executive Director, IWWG**

ABOUT WRITE WHERE YOU ARE

Write Rhode Island is a creative writing program open to young writers in Rhode Island. From our annual short fiction competition to our after-school classes, to an intensive summer program, we offer students the opportunity to find their voice and explore their creativity, while strengthening their writing skills. In 2022 Write Rhode Island partnered with the International Women's Writing Guild to gather stories and poems from some of the young writers in our state. We asked them to document what they see, think and experience in their communities. The resulting work is what they know, where they've been, what inspires them and where they hope to go. We are delighted to have played a part providing a platform for young writers' imaginations and voices. And we are grateful to all of those who believe in teens and their creativity. – **Diana Champa**

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