

ISSUE 6 | MAY 2021

Commentarius

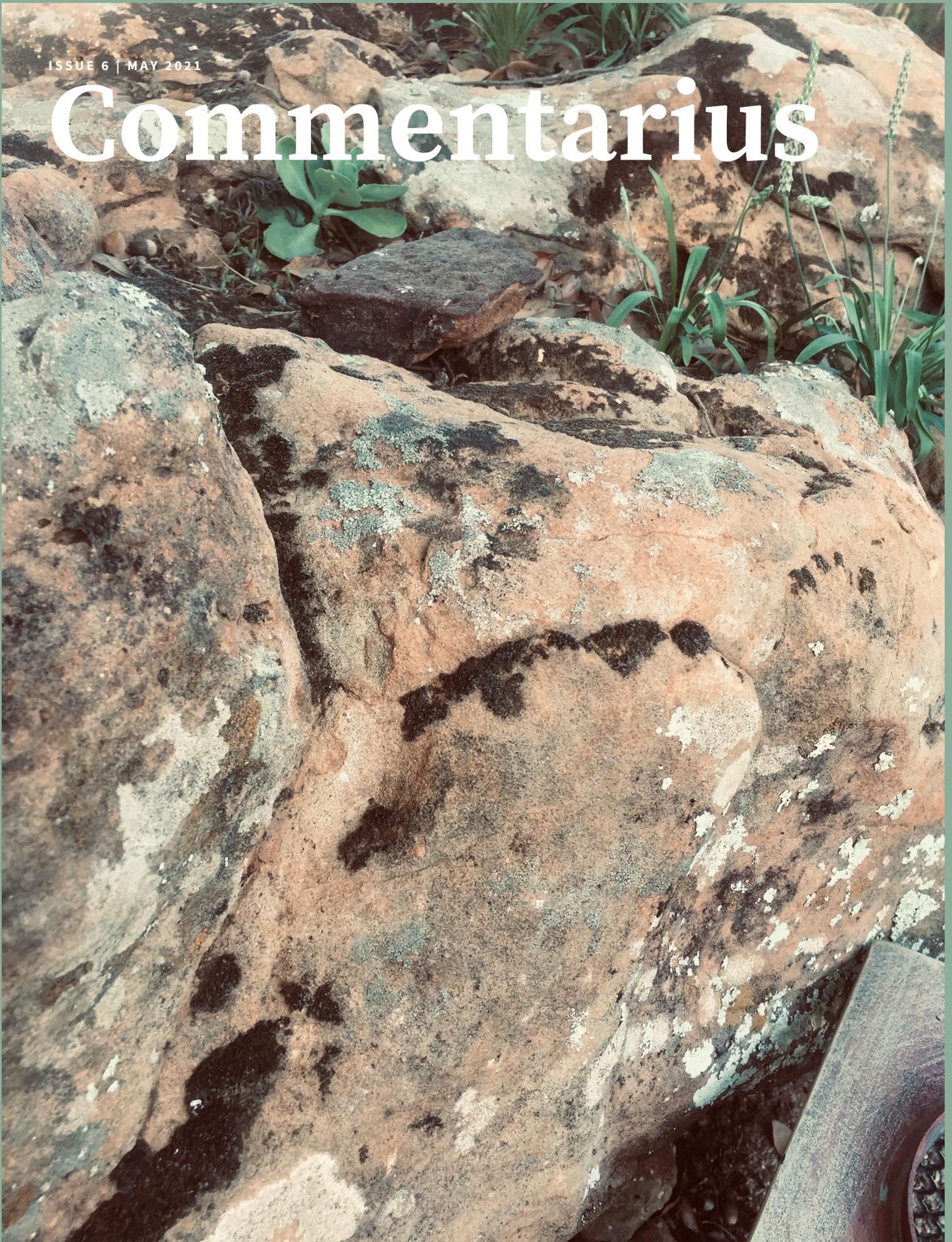


Table of Contents

Poetry

1 David Garrett

Snowglobe World

3 Jaime Herrera

Unrequited Love
Broken Mirror
The Lake

8 Marie Niyonzima

Masterpiece

9 Alissa Logan

Lilac

11 Mackenzie Wasson

Dead Roses

12 Katie Woodard

Nightmare

Short Fiction

15 Mackenzie Wasson

Garden of Eden

Art

ON THE COVER

Jaron Johnson

Unthinkable Life

2 Mackenzie Wasson

Maskless

4 Elizabeth Bacherini

Typology, 4
Encaustics, 10

7 Dikchya Biswa

Converse World

14 Kayden Portillo

Dissociations

17 Kaija Gerlach

Multiplicity

20 Sakari Ochoa

Angel
Cayendo
Ambos Mundos

24 Micha Boykin

Strangers

Commentarius Podcast

Faculty features have a new home on Spotify! Check out the interview with **Jay Ashby** and please hit subscribe to get up to date interviews in the future.

SNOWGLOBE
BY DAVID GARRETT

I feel like being alone tonight
I don't want to be on my phone tonight
Just me and my thoughts
Thinking of relationships sinking in a fragile world
Never knowing when to begin a conversation
Communication wasn't big in my family growing up
I feel small from being dealt with so roughly each day
In my snow globe world I lie awake



Maskless
Mackenzie Wasson

UNREQUITED LOVE
BY JAIME HERRERA

Words cannot describe how much I love you.
I've known you for so many years,
yet it feels like I only met you yesterday.

I remember the day that we met.
You came out of nowhere and made my life
so much better.
I never thought that someone could make me
as happy as you did.

But these past months, you've been different.
You don't spend as much time with me as you
used to.
Instead you spend your time with her.
The one person that I thought you despised.
It makes me doubt your love for me.
When I get close to you, you walk away.
When I tell you "I love you", you ignore me.
But it doesn't stop me from loving you.

The only time that you love me back
is when I shake the container full of catnip.
You purr and meow at me constantly until I give you
your tasty snack.
And when I do, you go back to ignoring me.
But this won't stop me from loving you.
My wonderful cat, Peyton.



Typology
Elizabeth Bacherini

BROKEN MIRROR
BY JAIME HERRERA

I look at myself in the mirror, wondering
if this is what people really see.
“She’s such a disappointment.”
“I’m embarrassed to be related to her.”
“She’s so annoying.”

Once in elementary school, a boy
told me that I was ugly.
That always stuck with me.
I don’t remember his name.
I only remember the impact that
it made.

I wonder what it’s like
to be proud of yourself.
Or to even be proud that you are who you are.
To be able to see a picture of yourself
and not hate what you see.
Or to accept other people’s compliments
and not think that they’re lying.

My father told me that I was pretty, funny, and smart.
He said it with a genuine smile and joyful eyes.
But I only saw lies escape from his lips.
He noticed my doubt and his eyes filled with sadness.

I only cry in the shower,
so that the running water masks
the sounds of my sadness.
I can never tell the difference
between my tears and the water
running down my cheeks.
Sometimes I have to gasp for air
because it’s so suffocating.
I want it to be over.

THE LAKE
BY JAIME HERRERA

I'm trying to skip stones, putting all of my hope
into them.

I'm so confused.

I don't know what to do.

I've never been so lost.

Each stone that I skip sinks.

I hope that each stone will give me an answer.

But they only fall short.

I wish that each stone will tell me what I want.

But I guess they're just as confused as I am.

I think back on the past few months

of my life wondering where I went wrong.

Wondering when and where I lost who I was.

But I am like the stones that I skip.

I'm confused and I sink to the bottom.

So heavy with confusion and wonder that I fall.



Converse World
Dikchya Biswa

MASTERPIECE
BY MARIE NIYONZIMA

Passing the unknown, you are deeper than anyone's understanding.

You are the rhythm of a heartbeat beating outside its chest, making a melody so remarkable,
That even the angels come down from heaven to hear.

You are love in its purest form.

Even jealousy itself envies you, everything that is more than you is actually less
Because you are everything that could be and everything that is.

You are a dream,
Even the night sky falls for you.
Abandoning the stars, it used your heart as a pillow
And only there, it finds true peace.

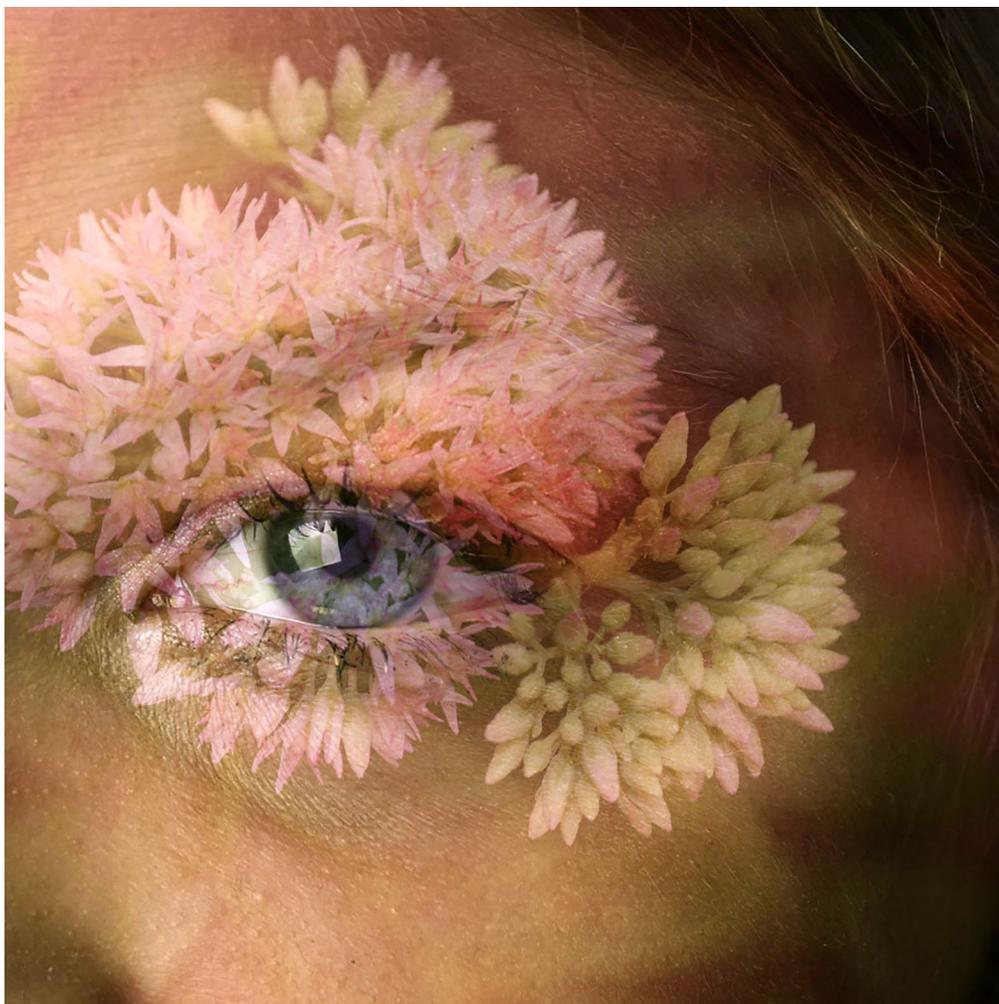
You are a book held together by a spine that's been bruised
pages that have been torn by people who did not care for your story,
broken and beautiful, you are poetry.

You are art, a masterpiece.

LILAC
BY ALISSA LOGAN

Hold onto me
As if i were a flower in your hand
As if i were a lilac that you so adore
Although i may be hard to hold

Hold onto me
Like a river flowing with gold
Don't let go
Keep tight with me, as I am a fragile lilac



Encaustics
Elizabeth Bacherini

DEAD ROSES
BY MACKENZIE WASSON

Her mind was slowly floating away.
Each thought took a piece of her brain.
Her mother compared it to a dead rose
With petals slowly falling from the stem,
Revealing an empty center.
She had never thought of it that way.

The doctors often poked and prodded her rose.
They tried to figure out why it wilted.
She told them it was just old and that it's natural,
But they seemed to be unable to hear her.

Often, she repeated this,
Trying to convince them
That all roses die eventually,
But she was always ignored.

She laid in a stark white room each night.
The sounds of beeping lulled her to sleep.
Her mother was always there, sitting in the corner.
Her cheeks were always stained with tears
As she told her that it would be okay,
All roses die eventually.
The words had been strangely comforting,
Maybe because they were the only ones she heard.

While her own rose lost its last petal,
Her mother held her hand tightly,
Guiding her on her journey to a new life,
One where roses would never wilt,
One where roses were forever bright.
A life where roses never die.



Dissociations
Kayden Portillo

NIGHTMARE
BY KATIE WOODARD

I felt the coldness of the grey stone walls of the basement
As the rain pounded against the roof.

I smelt a sickly sweet stench to the side of me.
I turned to the unpleasant smell and saw oak table,
Littered with small dead animals
Like rabbits and rats.

I didn't know why I was here,
Nor did I understand where I was,
I just knew that I needed to trudge down
The steep and damp staircase
Leading to another room deeper in the ground
And below the basement.

It was so dark down that staircase
That I could not see past the third step.
I gripped the frigid iron railing of the stairs
So that as my hand wrapped around the rail
And my fingernails would leave imprints on my palm.

My lungs fought to breathe in the dense air,
As I turned slowly to the dark corner in the basement
To see if she was still there.
Dread spread throughout my body
As I saw the outline of her back.
She was something like a witch,
Without the long charcoal color hat
Or the jet black felines.
Her hair was stringy and full of knots
And her clothes were very simple and tan.
When she turned from the corner
All I could see were her cold dead eyes
That seemed to bulge out of her head.

In a dreadfully long second,
I looked between the witch and the staircase,
Trying to decide which way I would rather go,
Knowing fully well that I was about to die
No matter what choice I made.

I looked back at her and she lunged towards me,
And screamed a high pitch sound.
In her right hand she held a threatening knife.

I tried to thrust myself down the stairs
But I moved in slow motion,
And she caught up with me quickly,
And I saw myself fall to the ground.

She stood over me,
Her eyes now red and bloodshot.
My vision started to fade to black
As I felt the cold knife on my throat
And I could no longer breathe.
I opened my eyes once more
And found myself in a basement.

I felt the coldness of the grey stone walls of the basement
As the rain pounded against the roof.

GARDEN OF EDEN
BY MACKENZIE WASSON

As we step out of the car, onto the gravel driveway, my sister, Eden, and I look at our surroundings. The glowing, white light of the moon reflects off Eden's black hair, accentuating her bright, blue eyes. I see her staring at something behind me and turn around to look. A gasp escapes my lips as I notice the beautiful deer standing behind the clutter of trees. Eden slowly makes her way next to me and pulls out her camera. She quickly snaps a picture of the deer and its giant horns, seemingly glowing from the light of the moon.

The deer hears the noise of approaching cars and darts off into the night.

"Freya, that deer was so beautiful. It looked magical," Eden says, grabbing and shaking my arm. She's always gotten excited about animals, just like our cousin, Ivy.

Two pairs of headlights turn in our direction as our friends pull up to us. I turn back towards the cabin we are staying at, taking in the beauty of it. The dark wood perfectly contrasts the white-framed windows and door, and the warm, glowing light from inside casts long shadows from the trees.

I feel a pair of arms wrap around my waist, squeezing me into a hug. I look down and see their sleeves are covered in dirt, telling me who it is. I turn around and see Ivy's wild, purple hair and her bright smile as she pulls back. Her yellow shirt's dirt stains tell me she's recently been in her garden.

"Oh my God. It's been so long, Freya. I've missed you so much," she says quickly. She reaches out and pulls me into another hug, her face snuggled into my hair.

As I pull back, I respond, "I know. I wish we could hang out more often."

"At least we have this trip together. I was really surprised when my mom agreed. Sometimes I feel like she has something against you and your mom."

I nod slightly, noticing two other figures emerge from the cars behind her. "Yeah, I've noticed that too."

Ivy turns around quickly, whacking me in the face with her hair before running towards a towering silhouette. Based on the curls and the deep laugh I hear as Ivy crashes into him, I can tell it's

Percy. Percy has been friends with Eden and I since we were three, and although he seems scary, he's very shy.

I make my way towards the second figure, Willow. Her hair has grown since the last time I saw her. Her previously bald head now has small little curls.

"Willow! Your hair looks so cute. I love it!" I say as I pull her into a hug

She squeezes me tightly. "Thank you so much, honey. I spent hours trying to get them to look even remotely presentable."

I look at her outfit. As always, it's very fashionable, representing whatever project she must be working on in fashion school. She once told me that she always makes outfits based on her big projects, and of course, the bright neon and block patterns relate to the sketches she had sent me last week.

Ivy, Percy, and Eden make their way over to us, each one holding a suitcase. I look over and see they got mine out as well, so I grab it. "Come on. Come on. Come on. Let us get inside. I'm freezing out here," Ivy says before she begins to run towards the cabin. Everyone laughs when she trips on a rock and almost falls on her face. "I'm fine. Totally fine."

Percy laughs quietly again as we reach the door beside Ivy. I grab the key from behind a false brick and unlock the door. I push the door open and move back, so everyone else can make their way inside. Willow begins to run, a miracle in those heels, and yells about getting the room with the best view. She disappears down the hallway, Percy and Ivy close behind. I hear Willow scream and Ivy's snorting laugh before Percy says, "No I want this room."

I look around at the large cabin. The ceilings are tall, and the living room has a very comfortable feeling to it. Eden jumps over the back on the brown leather couch and plops onto the cushions. "Very soft," she whispers to herself.

I chuckle and make my way to the kitchen on the right. The large marble island separates it from the living area and the fridge filled with condiments and water. We will have to go to the store tomorrow; it's too late to go now. I hear

footsteps approaching and a presence leans over my shoulder, looking into the fridge with me. Looking to my right, I see Percy's dark blue eyes looking at the condiments.

His gaze shifts to me and he nudges my shoulder, "Look, Freya. They have your favorite drink."

"What would that be?"

He looks at me as if I'm crazy. "Mustard, of course. What else would I be referring to?"

I cringe and move away from him as he grabs the mustard and opens it. He begins to move towards me, holding the mustard out like it's a weapon. I back up until my back hits the edge of the counter, and then I turn and run.

"Get back here and drink this. You need your nutrients." Percy's loud voices echoes through the room as his loud footsteps approach me. I turn into the hallway and run into Willow, taking her to the ground.

"Sorry," I say as I quickly roll underneath her, using her as a shield. "Give Willow the mustard, she needs nutrients more."

Willow shrieks as he gets closer and she covers her face. Percy begins to squirt the mustard all over both of us as we scream.

After Willow and I took showers in order to get rid of the putrid mustard smell and Ivy made dinner, we all went outside to sit by the fire pit. Eden and Percy are whispering quietly across from me. Ivy and Willow are next to me, roasting the marshmallows Percy brought.

"I wonder what they're talking about," Willow whispers.

"Probably how to get a corpse for my garden. My plants would really appreciate that." Ivy's small giggles turn into her laughing so hard she falls over, and Willow catches her head before it hits a rock.

"I know you're funny, Ivy, but please, don't laugh yourself into the fire. That would be hard to explain." Willow smiles slightly as she pulls Ivy back into a sitting position.

I hear a branch crack behind me and turn around. The trees guard whatever was moving,

leaving me to assume it was an animal. I turn back towards the fire and put my marshmallow back into the fire, leaving it there until it catches fire. I then put it between my graham crackers and take a large bite just as another noise comes from behind me. This time, Percy and Eden seem to hear it, too, as they stop whispering. Percy slowly rises from his seat and makes his way towards the cabin.

"Stay here. I'm going to check it out."

Eden starts to protest, but Percy shushes her and continues walking.

After several intense minutes of waiting, I see Percy's curls peek out of the doorway. He remains in the doorway for a few seconds before he begins to make his way over, shouting that nothing was in the house. "It must have been an animal or something in a tree."

The next morning, I wake up alone in Eden and Ivy's bed. I make my way down the hallway and hear someone puking in the bathroom. I knock on the door before opening it. I find Eden hunched over the toilet, clutching her stomach tightly. I run over, grabbing her hair just as she begins to puke again. I take the hair tie off my wrist and pull her long hair into a bun just below the nape of her neck. I rub her back as she continues to hurl all of the food she ate into the toilet.

Last night, Percy ran to the store to buy groceries and other necessities. When he got back, Ivy offered to cook dinner for everyone. Eden was fine after eating Ivy's chicken. She was still fine after we roasted marshmallows. I don't know what would've caused this. I call for someone to come in here, and Ivy arrives in the doorway.

Her gaze moves between Eden's hunched form to me. She mouths, "What's going on?"

I shrug, continuing to rub her back. "Can you go get her something?" I look back towards Eden. "I don't know what, just something that will help."

Eden looks up from the toilet bowl and I begin to panic. Her normally wide and happy eyes are drooping, barely able to open. Eden opens her mouth to speak, but her lips grow purple then she collapses, landing in my lap.



Multiplicity
Kaija Gerlach

“Ivy,” I gasp.

“I’m going to call for an ambulance.” Ivy turns and sprints down the hallway, her footsteps shaking the walls around me.

After what feels like hours, Percy runs into the room, seemingly out of breath. He looks down at Eden and freezes. After a few seconds, Percy seems to remember why he’s here and grabs Eden from my arms. He carries her to the couch in the living room, and I follow close behind.

He puts his fingers on her neck, feeling for a pulse. Ivy stands in the kitchen, talking on the phone. She yells at Percy, asking about her pulse.

“Her heart - it’s not- it’s not beating. Ivy, what do I do? What do I do?”

I move my hand over her mouth, trying to feel her breath. “She’s not breathing, Ivy.”

Only her lips were blue in the bathroom, but as she lay there, lifeless, her skin slowly began to turn a cool, blue shade. It’s only then that I can process that she died.

Ivy continues to talk to the dispatcher, informing them of the situation. Percy is frozen over Eden, staring at her with wide eyes. Ivy tries to get his attention but eventually has to push him out of the way and give Eden CPR. Each pump on Eden’s chest shakes her entire body. Willow enters the room, her eyes dazed and confused. She looks from Percy to me, then to Eden and Ivy. A wave of emotions crosses her face; confusion, fear, realization, then sadness. She starts to walk towards us, her hands over her mouth, but after one step, she passes out.

My hand remains in Eden’s as tears form in my eyes. No matter how hard Ivy tries, she doesn’t wake up. My hand still holds her’s when the ambulance arrives, followed by the police and a firetruck. It’s still grasping her tightly when the paramedics place her on a stretcher. I hold her hand as long as I can before a police officer pries my hand from Eden’s cold, lifeless one. It’s only then that I begin to completely breakdown.

A paramedic takes me to another ambulance, wrapping me in a blanket. A police officer walks over and begins to ask me questions. I answer to the best of my ability, but I cannot seem to understand anything that’s happening. The only thing I truly

understand is that Eden is gone, and she’s never coming back.

I call my mother as soon as I begin to calm down. “Mom-”

“What is it, darling? What happened? Are you crying?” Her voice fills with worry.

“It’s Eden. She’s de- She’s gone. She’s gone, mommy.” I struggle to find the correct words, and when I do, the tears spill over again.

“What?” Her voice breaks. “Mandy, get me the next flight back home. I need to get there as soon as possible.” I hear a rustling noise before her voice comes back, “Okay darling, I’m going to get home as soon as I possibly can. The next flight back over there is at six a.m. for you.” I hear a quiet sob escape her lips. “I’m so sorry, Freya. I wish I could be there with you now. I never should’ve taken a job so far away. Oh my God. My baby. My Eden. I have to go, Freya. I love you. I need to pack.” Her words are rushed and barely audible. “Bye, honey.”

“Bye, mom. I love you too.”

A police officer comes over, asking me the same questions as the previous three officers did. I repeat my answers. After he finishes, he leans over and whispers, “I’m not supposed to tell you this, but you obviously need answers. We found traces of poison in her drink, along with a bottle hidden under the bed. It’s the same stuff used in Botox, botulinus toxin. I’m so sorry, sweetie, but this has been classified as a homicide.”

All of my breath is seemingly knocked out of me. Who would do this? Why Eden? She was the sweetest person I’d ever met. Why kill her? Why not me? Why not anyone but her?

I try to think of who would’ve done this. Percy was always whispering with her. Maybe he told her something he couldn’t take back? He was always staring at her when she wasn’t looking. But would Percy really be able to do such a thing?

It could’ve been Ivy. She’s the one who made everyone’s dinner. I thought it was kind of weird that she served each plate separately. But Ivy’s so sweet. There’s no way she was capable of committing such a heinous act. There’s no way.

What about Willow? She's always seemed nice, but we have only known her for a few months. What if everything we thought we knew about her was a lie? What if she's really a cold-blooded murderer? She didn't even leave her room until Eden was already dead. But, then again, she did pass out from shock. That's pretty hard to fake.

It had to be someone we knew. It was obviously targeted. She was the only one hurt. Not hurt, dead. I can't believe someone would do something like this? Who all knew we were here? I know I told my mom and dad- wait. I need to call dad.

The phone line rings four times before he finally picks up. "What's up, Frey?" I hear loud noises coming from the background.

"Where are you, dad? You need to come to the cabin."

"I'm at the airport. Why? What's going on?"

"Why are you at the airport?" My curiosity overtakes me. The sound of someone whispering plays through the speaker.

He hesitates, "I was going to visit your mother. What's happened? You sound like you've been crying." The noises in the background grow quieter as his voice turns into a whisper.

"Eden's dead. Someone killed her."

He's silent for a very long time. "Dad?" I ask, trying to figure out if he's still there. I pull the phone back and see the timer continue counting the seconds. "Dad? Are you there?"

"Yeah. I'm on my way. I'm leaving the airport. I'll be there tomorrow." His voice sounds emotionless.

I open my mouth to respond, but a noise signaled that the call ended.

The police found the false brick lying in the bush in front of the patio. They suspect someone watched us get the spare key from behind the brick or that they already knew about it. They dusted for fingerprints, but they didn't find any that belonged to anyone other than those there.

Police officers were in and out of the cabin, so I returned to my house, only five minutes away. Mom arrived last night. She hasn't left my side since she

came home. Dad, on the other hand, hasn't left his office. He has not spoken to anyone. He opened the front door and went straight to his office, not even acknowledging my mother or me.

I hear a knock on the front door and open it, expecting another police officer. Outside is Percy. I stare at him silently, waiting for him to speak. When he doesn't, I begin to close the door.

Percy shoves his foot in the doorway, keeping it from closing.

"If you're not going to say anything, Percy, just leave," I push harder on the door.

He still doesn't speak. His face turns red before he turns away, sighing. When he looks back at me, tears are falling down his face. "I was in love with Eden, Freya. We were in love. I can't function without her. We were going to tell you guys, but then she- she-" He begins to sob, barely able to catch his breath.

I open the door completely, then pull him into a hug. We stay there for a long time. Eventually, I can no longer hold back my tears.

I hear footsteps behind me and smell my mother's perfume as another pair of arms wrap around me. Percy's cries fall silent. He snuffles into my shoulder before pulling back. When he lets go, my mom releases me and goes to him, putting her hand on his shoulder.

She leans in and whispers something into his ear. He nods. "Thank you, Mrs. Springs."

"Percy, I have told you one million times to call me Allison. Your mom is my best friend. You're basically a part of the family." My mom motions us into the house, closing the door behind her.

"Sorry, Allison."

Percy stays at our house for the rest of the week. He tells me every story about Eden and their relationship that he can think of. We spend each day talking about Eden and our favorite things about her. We tell each other funny stories that make us laugh, then cry.

As I'm laughing at the most recent story Percy is telling me, my father storms out of his office. Every



Angel



Cayendo
Sakari Ochoa



Ambos Mundos

step he takes shakes the walls around us, a few of our paintings fall off of the walls.

My mom steps into the hallway in front of him and says, "Calm down! You've been home for a week. It's the first time I have seen you outside of your office and you're breaking things."

He pushes past her, shoving her into the wall. A vase falls to the floor, shattering on impact. He opens the front door so forcefully that it bangs into the wall, knocking even more things from their place.

Percy stands from his spot on the couch next to me and walks outside towards my father. He grabs my dad's arm, spinning him around so they are facing each other. I can't hear what they are saying, but their body language tells me that it's not good.

My dad rips his arm out of Percy's hand and gets into his car, flipping Percy off before driving away. Percy stays outside for a moment, staring at the car as it disappears into the afternoon traffic. I turn towards my mom, who is staring out the front door in disbelief. I look down at the shattered vase before noticing the blood flowing from a gash on her foot. "You're bleeding, Mom."

She looks at me then down at her foot. She opens her mouth to speak but instead walks down the hall.

Looking outside, I see Willow talking to Percy. They seem to be arguing. She looks at the house and through the doorway, making eye contact with me. Percy says something to her and she rolls her eyes before making her way past him.

When she enters the house, she stands in front of the door, leaving space between us. Percy walks over to me, asking where my mom went before going down the hallway.

I look at the floor, waiting for Willow to say something.

"Freya, I am so sorry. I know how hard this must be for you. Eden was your best friend. She was mine, too. I just—" She pauses and I look up at her, taking in her disheveled appearance. Her clothes are wrinkled and stained. Her makeup is smudged and seems to have been on for days. Her eyes are sad and her posture is slouched. Willow doesn't look like, well, Willow.

"I can't believe she's gone. I can't

comprehend what happened," she finally says.

I remember the look that crossed her face that night, the confusion and fear. I faintly remember her passing out, a memory that was lost within the events of that night. I open my mouth to say something, but nothing comes out.

Finally, my mother and Percy enter the room. In my mom's hand is a crumpled piece of paper.

"Freya, what did the police tell you about the poison?" my mom asks, her voice barely a whisper. A look of disbelief is stuck on her face as she looks down at the paper.

"I think it was something used in Botox. They found a bottle of it under the bed."

Percy purses his lips before saying, "Come with me."

I look over at Willow, who silently asks if she can join. I nod.

We make our way down the hallway and turn into my dad's office. Percy sits in front of his computer and pulls something up. He motions me over and I make my way behind him.

I look at the screen and see an order for botulinus toxin, dated a week before Eden's death.

My mom, who had been standing silently behind me, hands me the paper she'd been holding. Then pulls out her phone to call someone, stepping into the hall.

"False brick is third to the right, slightly darker.

Freya says Eden's in her room. Stuff arrives tonight, I go tomorrow."

"What?" I whisper, more to myself than anyone else. I look at the scribbles and the marked-out words below before turning the paper over.

"Freya called. I had to go back. Plan's falling apart.

Aurora called. She's done with me"

Aurora? My mom's sister? Ivy's mom? What does he mean? Done with what?

I glance up at Willow who's leaning over Percy's shoulder, looking at the order form, before looking at the note again."

"I had to. Eden was going to tell Allison. I had to."

My hold on the note falters and it falls to the floor. I hear the front door open and my mom's voice echoes down the hall. An unfamiliar voice

answers and I make my way towards them.

One of the detectives that questioned me that night is standing in the doorway. He looks at me and my mom turns around. The look on my face must show my fear as she runs over and says, "It's alright, Freya. It's going to be okay. They're going to take care of him."

"Mom, he was cheating on you. He killed Eden because he was cheating." Tears form in my eyes as I think of the man who seemed so in love with my mother. I can't help but question everything I thought I knew about him. The man I knew wasn't capable of this. Of murder.

My mom doesn't respond, instead, she wipes my tears and pulls me into a hug. When she lets go, she motions the detective over and walks us back to the office.

The police were waiting inside my house when my dad came home. They had hidden the cars in the alleyway so their presence wouldn't scare him off.

When he walked in the door, surprise crossed his face and he tried to run. They caught him instantly.

He was arrested. His trial seemed to happen quickly. There was so much evidence against him that his guilt wasn't even a question.

My aunt, Aurora, came to our house one day after the trial. She tried to apologize to my mom, but they ultimately began fighting.

Ivy was there. It was the first time I had seen her since Eden's death. She was a wreck and was crying the entire time she was here.

In the end, Aurora moved out of state, but Ivy stayed behind, moving in with us. Every day was a struggle to get through, but we were making it. We just had to take it one day at a time.*



Strangers
Micah Boykin