

# ANOTHER STORY



RED DEER PUBLIC LIBRARY'S MAGAZINE

ISSUE NO. 04

FALL/WINTER 2022







# WELCOME

to our FALL/WINTER 2022 issue!

Here we have collected a myriad of original works across generations living in or from Central Alberta.

Deeply personal and affecting pieces, beautiful artwork, and stunning photography. We hope you enjoy, are moved, and are as inspired by our featured creators as we were.

Enjoy!

*Claire*

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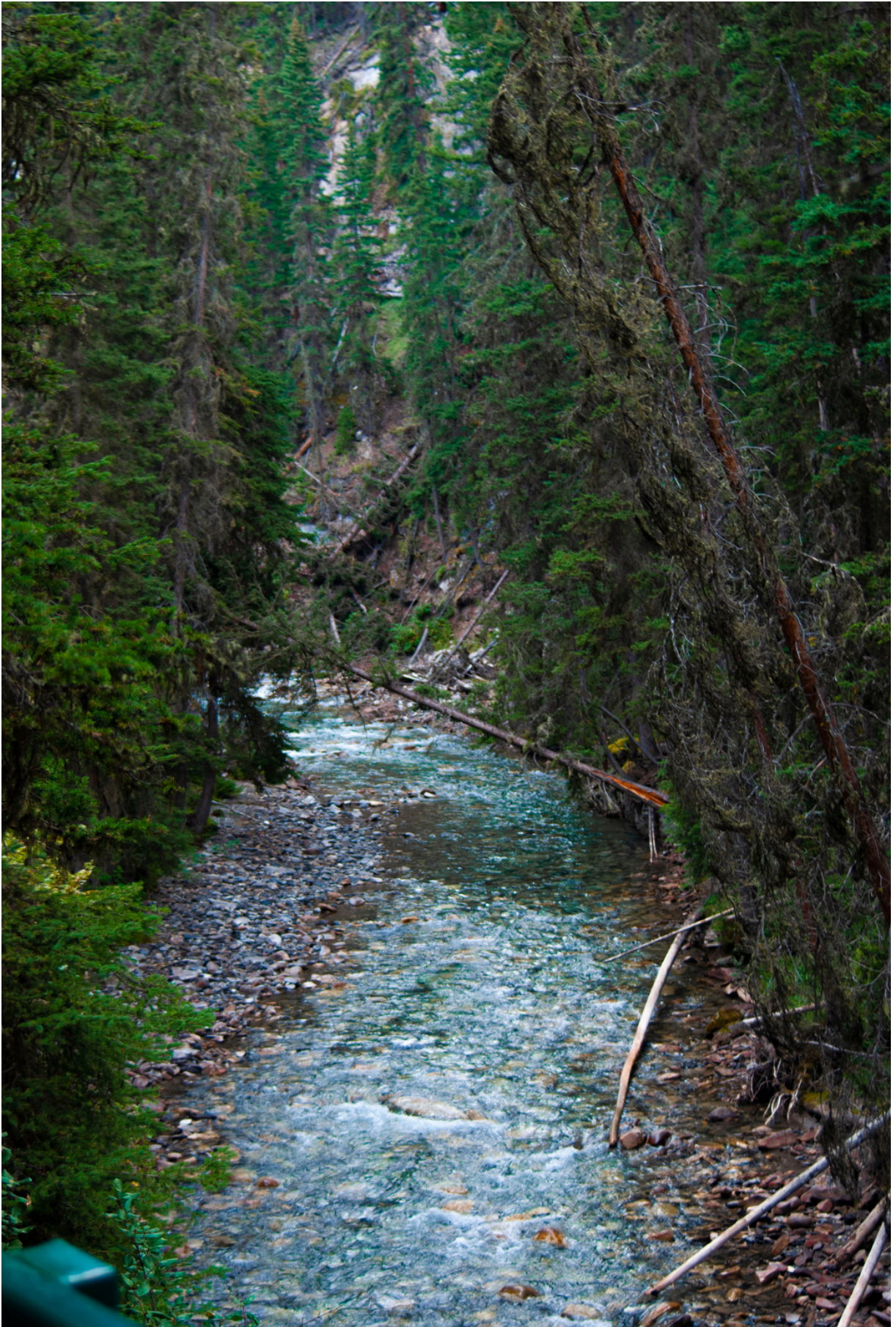


In all honesty, it's sad  
How people so easily get mad

I can't say anything, though  
'Cause I would beat up more than a piece of dough

The whole world has their own ways of coping  
However I wish mine didn't include just hoping

**by Katie Chen**  
age 12



***Bauer Bradley***  
age 17





# I Grew Up to Be an Addict

When I was 7, I wanted to be a doctor  
But I grew up to be an addict  
When I was 11, I wanted to be a veterinarian  
But I grew up to be an addict

When I was 15, I wanted to be a professional snowboarder and  
When I was 20, I wanted to be a psychologist  
But I grew up to be an addict

You see, an addict is not a person  
An addict is the shell of a person who once was  
You see, this shell is the vessel for a monster

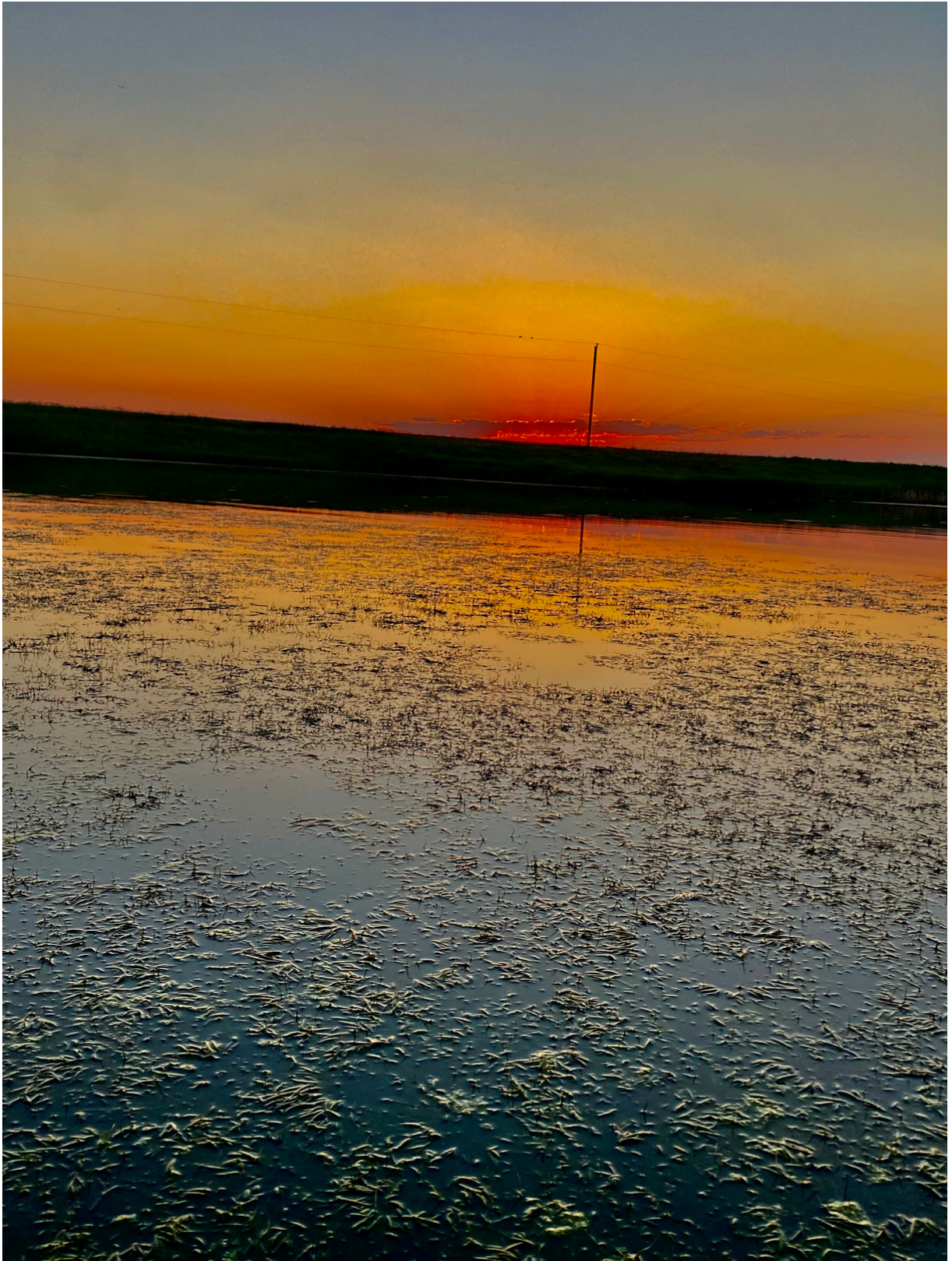
A monster who starts small, but slowly grows as it takes ownership of its vessel  
It claws its way through the vessel, ripping, gnarling, and tearing at every piece as  
it digs its teeth deeper  
and deeper

When I grew up, I wanted to be happy  
But I grew up to be a monster  
This monster though, it has a weakness

In its all- consuming mission, it forgets that the Creator is standing by  
It ignores the last remnants of the true owner of the vessel  
You see, its weakness lies in the remnants giving themselves over to the Creator

Once this happens, the monster can be defeated  
Destroyed, Slayed, Defeated  
I've slain my monster  
I grew up to be an addict  
But I cannot wait to see what I grow up to be now





*Emily Williamson*  
age 22

# Late on Tuesday Afternoon

by *Jana Olson*

*age 51*

We gathered around the center island of the circulation desk and variously leaned and rested on it. The holds had been called, the due date reminder bookmarks stamped far into the future. There was nothing left to dust, repair, or rearrange. We were at the point of the work day where we had already rehashed our off time experiences of the last several days, and discussed the minutiae of our upcoming plans. We were (don't tell our boss!) bored. So when a tiny, wizened, dandelion-fluff haired woman approached the desk, we literally pushed and jostled each other in a low-stakes, high-interest contest to reach the computer station first. I won.

"Hel-lo! We are so happy to see you! How are you this afternoon?"

"Goodness, but there are a lot of you. I'm surprised there aren't more people about the library. It's usually quite busy here when I make my weekly Tuesday afternoon visit. I guess I'm a little later than usual today ... maybe that's it?"

"That's probably so—Tuesday evenings tend to be a lot quieter than Tuesday afternoons. Today has been kind of weird, though. There were oodles of people here this morning, and then, all of a sudden, no one. We've finished all our work and are tired of talking to one another, so we're very happy to have you come to check your books out."

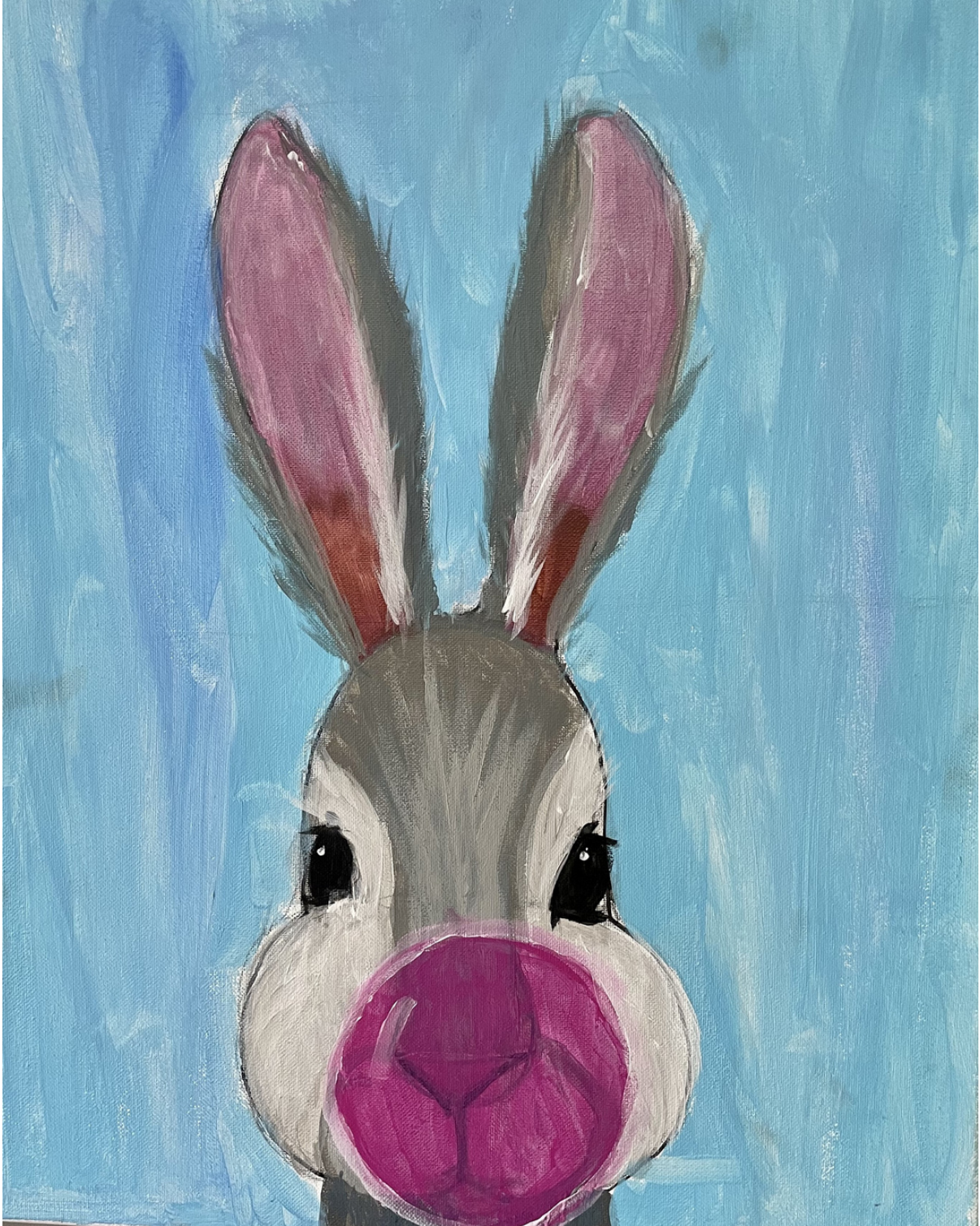
"Well. Isn't that nice. I'm glad I could provide some interest in your afternoon."



I finished scanning the outgoing books and placed them into the patron's lovely floral quilted book bag before coming around the counter to hand the now-heavy bag to her. The bag hung from her crooked elbow almost to her knees, but her posture didn't change at all with the transfer of the weighty bag from my hands to her arms.

"Enjoy the rest of your day, and thanks for giving me a way to fill a little bit of time! I'll try to remember how leisurely things felt today when I'm here and running around like a chicken with my head cut off tomorrow!" I chuckled and made a 'frantic' face. "Maybe I'll go and rearrange the display shelves for the fourth time today."

"Or," she flashed me a beatific smile as she slowly turned to walk away, "you could plan a murder."



*Stacey Manabat*  
age 9



# Nature, External. Nature, Internal.

*Inspired by Once in a Lifetime by Jay Bigam*

by **Claire Stange**

*age 21*

Light dances across the sky  
to a tune only it knows  
Swirls, dips, dives  
colour bounces and plays  
This performance needs no spotlight  
it creates its own

Blues in hues as soft as the feathers of a bluebird  
and as dark as the depths of the ocean  
Purples embrace with their richness  
and bring a softness the shade of lilacs  
Greens the shade of the plumpest, juiciest green apple  
and with the deep envelopment of the forest canopy  
The faintest glow of orange brings even more warmth  
to a sky already alight with the colours of the night

Beneath the sky  
that sweeps, illuminates, calms  
rocks lie in wait  
to remind us  
of nature's permanence  
This illuminating performance  
will fade  
and disappear  
but the beauty it imprinted on our souls  
will last forever

We're reminded  
watching this beautiful scene unfold  
that nature takes on many forms  
It is both temporary  
and permanent  
just as we strive to be

It teaches us  
to appreciate the natural beauty found outside of us  
but it also reminds us to appreciate  
the natural beauty  
we all carry within





*Fiona Epp*  
age 16



*Mackenzii Hayley-Clark*  
age 22





# Undefined Misogyny

by *Willow Glover*

*age 15*

How many agree that households should have a mother and a father,  
Two,  
Or three,  
Or four kids,  
And this is what makes a household home,  
The father should work,  
Be the breadwinner,  
And the mother?  
well, she should be a homemaker,  
Cook,  
And clean,  
And tend to all her husband's needs,  
She should be seen not heard,  
Dainty but not frail,  
And she should not fail to keep her appearance,  
perfect,  
Misogynistic isn't it?

This is individual versus society,  
I am a girl,  
Who refuses to fail,  
So I do not stand under men,  
I am hard-headed and strong,  
I would still like to admit when I am wrong,  
I do not want children.

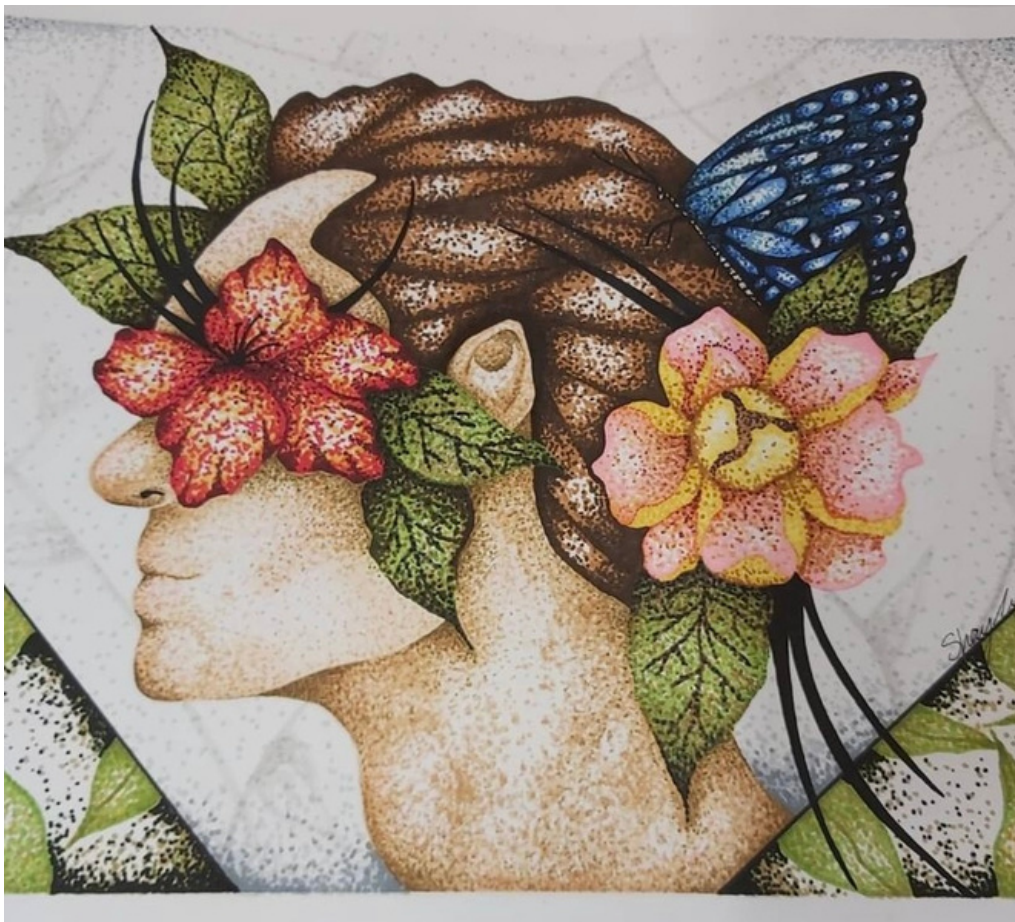
To this, my doctor raised his eyebrows,  
My vows to be true to myself were tested,  
But this is not the 1950s,  
I do not have to get married,  
Until I,  
myself see fit,  
This is my society,  
Undeniably strong-willed women,  
Are what allowed the female gender to vote,  
And for me to devote,  
Myself to what I am passionate about,  
I want to practice medicine,  
As a doctor,  
Not as a nurse,  
So I may have to rehearse correcting patients,  
That mistake me for the latter,  
Shattering the perspective,

Of what a girl should be when she is older,  
So I give views stuck on an immobile timeline a cold shoulder,  
As my perspective is left to smolder.  
Anything is susceptible to change,  
Even a wild range,  
of,  
Opinions,  
Morals,  
And ethics,  
Realize that all you have to do is think for yourself,  
Then maybe you can put past opinions of the bookshelf,  
That is growth.



From the Cover... *Shaylee Bergen*

age 19



## Epilogue

BOOM!

A loud explosion echoed through the home and village of the Daylight family. Screams were heard and cries of terror interrupted the sleep of a rather peaceful girl. As she awoke she propped herself up against her bed, looking through the glass of her window to get a better look of what was so important that it disturb her slumber, thus being a young fifteen year-old girl.

Peering through the glass barrier, the girl could see fire and families running from their homes to escape a tall black figure the girl could only make out a silhouette of. In fact there were multiple.

The black humanoid structure stalked closer and closer to the window of the young teenager, causing her to move away in fright. Her hand flew to her gaping mouth and jumped off her bed to find her parents. But her parents were nowhere to be seen. She rushed out of her room and darted to the place her parents were most likely to be in: the master bedroom. They weren't there. She checked the kitchen. Nothing. The basement. Nothing. The living room. Nothing. Not a single living or non-living thing stirred in the house besides the girl who was panicking and looking frantically through every room for her parents. The empty home had become eerily quiet. Not a single noise filled the endless void of silence in the girl's ears besides the loud ringing that pounded on her eardrums. Frightened, she stepped carefully across floorboards and stairs feeling as if she made a single noise someone or something would jump out of the shadows ready to kill her. The girl reached the front door and looked around the large living space she had shared many memories and laughs with her parents in. She stepped closer to touch the soft velvet fabric of the sofa. But as she stepped closer, she hit a loose floorboard she never noticed and as it creaked, Fearing something or someone, she rushed outside to escape the building she once called home to find a safe haven away from all this chaos. But instead of what she was hoping for, the girl received an unexpected and horrifying sight. All she saw were bodies.



Dead bodies with their limbs sprawled out in weird angles and had been dropped dead on the ground like flies. Some were almost aflame due to the growing fire. She looked down and her eyes widened when she moved her gaze to her right. Stares. Dead cold stares of her parents. Sobbing, she rushed to her mother's side and hugged the body of her mother close to her chest. She traced her fingers along her mother's neck and then felt it. Dents and scars as if her mother's life had been squeezed out of her body. The girl assumed those strange black figures had something to do with this.

GASP!

She turned her head to her right, which was her father's body and immediately rushed over to him. Despite the raspy breathing, the girl felt that she could still have her father with her. "Dawn... My beautiful... daughter." The words were barely audible but fortunately, Dawn could make them out. Dawn choked down a sob. "Dad...?" She attempted to hold down her sobs and cries but they threatened her throat causing her to slap her hand over her mouth. "Dad. Stay! Stay with me! Please!" She practically screamed it out. "Dawn... Be.. careful..." Dawn's father managed to respond to her pleas. "Careful from what?" She asked. He didn't reply but instead said; "Don't forget. Me and your mother love you... so much." He took his final dying breath, and fell limp in her arms. Dawn's eyes went glassy and blinded her vision. She felt something warm run down her cheeks like river water into a pond. She couldn't take the pain any longer. She had lost her family. She had lost her friends. She had lost her home. But most of all... she had lost her hope. Hope of staying with her family. Hope of having a normal life. Hope of being safe. She screamed out in agony without a care in the world. She didn't care if someone killed her. She didn't care if those metal figures took her away to lock her in chains to starve to death. All she wanted was her parents back.

The metal figures stepped out of the fire and picked her up by the arms. She screamed and flailed around trying to knock their cold hands off of her but it did no use. She tried running back to her parents but the humanoids' grip on her arms tightened and she gave up and let them take her wherever they were taking her. They took her aboard a plane that held most of the children and teens from the wrecked village and stuck a clear mask on her and pushed a button on the side of the mask. The last thing she saw was a blue coloured gas that she inhaled before she was knocked out cold....



*Teagan Smith*  
age 22



# Sagacious by Billy Kushnir

age 72

A flower lady in electric colourblazing, and she is petals of ultra design from magical splendours, and suddenly a sweet time fills the air, and glowing are the strings of harmony.

such is a wonderful world

A welcome lady as utopian embrace, and you find the sun revolving within your being, and golden is her chariot on a beam of crystal, and she pulls into a cosmic sphere.

such is a beautiful world

A twilight of lady of universal light, and never there, never here, always now, and she is laughter, like a wind that wafts her breath, and a para birdsoars on her silvery wing.

are you not a wonderful world

A soul lady upon her stargate, and she flutters high on that high land, deep in her angelic countenance, and an aura of divinity shines all around, which showers beauty, upon a warm orb.

are you not a beautiful world

A aesthete lady, omniscient to that of the chambers of a flower, and Eden unfolds to her fixed eye of soul

hunger is the name

asperity is the game

as the pseud

oh my lord, my sweet lord,  
as the pseudo eradicate this sage and all,  
which is the divine state of being sagely sagacious.

A lady ascending, in a graceful bearing, sweeping all before her, ever beheld, beautiful she holds, she knows how, she knows how to hold her own, to be so sated.



**Sophia Felipe**  
age 12

Like my father, I was born a solider of Neptune. On my home planet, it's cold. With temperatures well below freezing, I could never rid the chill that lived within my bones. Earth, well, Earth is much different.

The sun rises and so does the heat. A reminder of the vulnerability of human skin. Unlike

the other men in our unit, my skin looks like sand when it gets wet. One perk: I don't burn easily. The others are often turning red, their skin shedding like a serpent. I enjoy the warmth more than the others.

"Shay!"

My human name barked from the commander's lips pulls my eyes from the horizon.

"Sir." I salute him and stand at the ready: body straight, heels of my boots together, one arm at my side, the other clenched into a fist that's held above my heart. Hearts plural if we're being technical. My true heart beats much slower than a human heart. Its pace never increasing or decreasing. The epitomy of consistency.

"We're pushing further into the city center."

The commander despises humans. If it were up to him, he would rip the human skin suit

from his body. I nod because his statement requires no response from me.

"You'll follow at a distance. I want no human left unaccounted."

Even in my human state, I can hear his teeth grind together. "Yes, sir."

\*\*\*

In the city, I walk through buildings on quiet feet sticking to the shadows. So far, I've found no stragglers. A sound to the right has me reaching for the gun on my hip. A door stands ajar. I slip inside.

A girl rests against the wall. Her hand clenched against her midsection. When she sees me, her eyes grow large.



I take a step toward her. “Don’t run.”

She clamps her eyes shut. Her lips move but no sound comes.

“Are you sick?” My attention zeros in on the small specks that dance along her cheeks and over her nose. There’s a human word for these blemishes: freckles. She’s tainted. Unsure if she heard me, I tilt my head. “Are you sick?”

This time, her eyes open. They’re an alluring combination of brown and gold. “No . . . I’m not.”

“You’re bleeding.” I held her gaze for a moment. “May I see you’re wound?” Questions. They keep humans calm.

Instead of replying, she pulled her hand from the growing blood stain on her shirt. A knife handle protrudes from her stomach. I kneel in front of her.

“You’re going to save me?”

I remove bandages and medical tape from my bag. “I’m keeping you alive.” My human heart pangs within my chest. “It’s not within my power to save you.”

Her bottom lip quivers as she watches my hand move toward the knife. “A-are you some kind of doctor?”

The question wasn’t new, but the softness of her voice stilled my hand. It wasn’t fear that coated her words, nor anger. Both emotions I’m accustomed to. A frown stretched my lips before I thought to stop it. “Yes, I’ve had years of medical training.”

Her eyes blinked once, twice, then three times. “Okay.” Her head lulled forward as her body slouched against my already extended arm.

She felt weightless pressed against my palm. Excellent. I could work in silence - a peace few humans offered me. With both hands, I lowered her to the ground.

My fingers traced the perimeter of the wound on her stomach. The handle was short, blunt, and covered in leather. Not one of ours. Although there was no way to tell the exact length of the knife, most would have to be equal to or shorter in size than the handle – otherwise the weapon would be unbalanced. Lucky for her, it was small.

The best way to proceed was to remove the knife, stop the bleeding, and close the wound. Pressing my thumb against the hollow of her wrist, I found her pulse: steady. Her skin was warm and clammy, but that was to be expected with the heat of the day.

My fingers wrapped around the handle of the knife. With even pressure, I pulled it from her body. The steel looked clean enough. I took some antiseptic solution and rinsed the wound before sewing her skin together. Unlike my own, this girl's skin came together as easily as it had been ripped apart – like butter. I covered my work with bandages and lowered the girl's shirt.

She was young, sixteen at most. On Neptune, she'd be considered an adult. Her hair, like her eyes, remind me of autumn. Brown like nutrient rich soil with streams of gold that resembled fall leaves. If it weren't for the freckles, she'd have a chance at being deemed pure.

Her brows knit together.

I waited for the fear that would follow when she realized who knelt beside her.

Her gaze fixed on my face as her hands reached for the knife that was no longer lodged into her stomach. "It's gone."



My eyes grew twice their size. She was grateful, genuinely relieved that I had saved her life. Me – an alien who released a lethal virus on her planet and was currently hunting the survivors. Okay, it wasn't my idea to release the virus or hunt the survivors, but I felt honored to be part of the mission. Did that make us enemies? I was a soldier duty bound to protect my planet and its people. Was I a monster for choosing to protect one life form over another?

"Well, that's disappointing."

I followed her gaze to the knife.

She shrugged her shoulder. "Felt bigger."

I plucked the weapon from the ground spinning it with a flick of my fingers, so the handle pointed toward her. "All stab wounds cause pain. The size of the blade matters little."

She took the knife. "If it's not in your power to save me, why did you stop me from dying?" Her thumb smeared the blood on the blade as it moved toward the tip. "I'm tainted. I thought you only saved the pure."

I watched her thumb make a path through her own blood on the blade. Unlike the pure, the tainted were resilient. Their mind, soul, and body able to sustain itself in the harshest conditions. If we could combine the physical characteristics of the pure with the resilient nature of the tainted, our species would become unstoppable. No one in the galaxy would dare attack us.

She accepted my silence while she stood to her feet. "You saved my life." She held a hand against her midsection as she released her grip on the wall. "I'm Tessa."

I shouldered the medical bag and turned from her. "Sargent Shay." It felt wrong to speak the name of a tainted, "Come on, we've got a long way to go." But I couldn't ignore the way her name sounded inside my head. Tessa. For the second time, my human heart disregarded its normal rhythm.



**Jaclyn Bell**

age 32









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