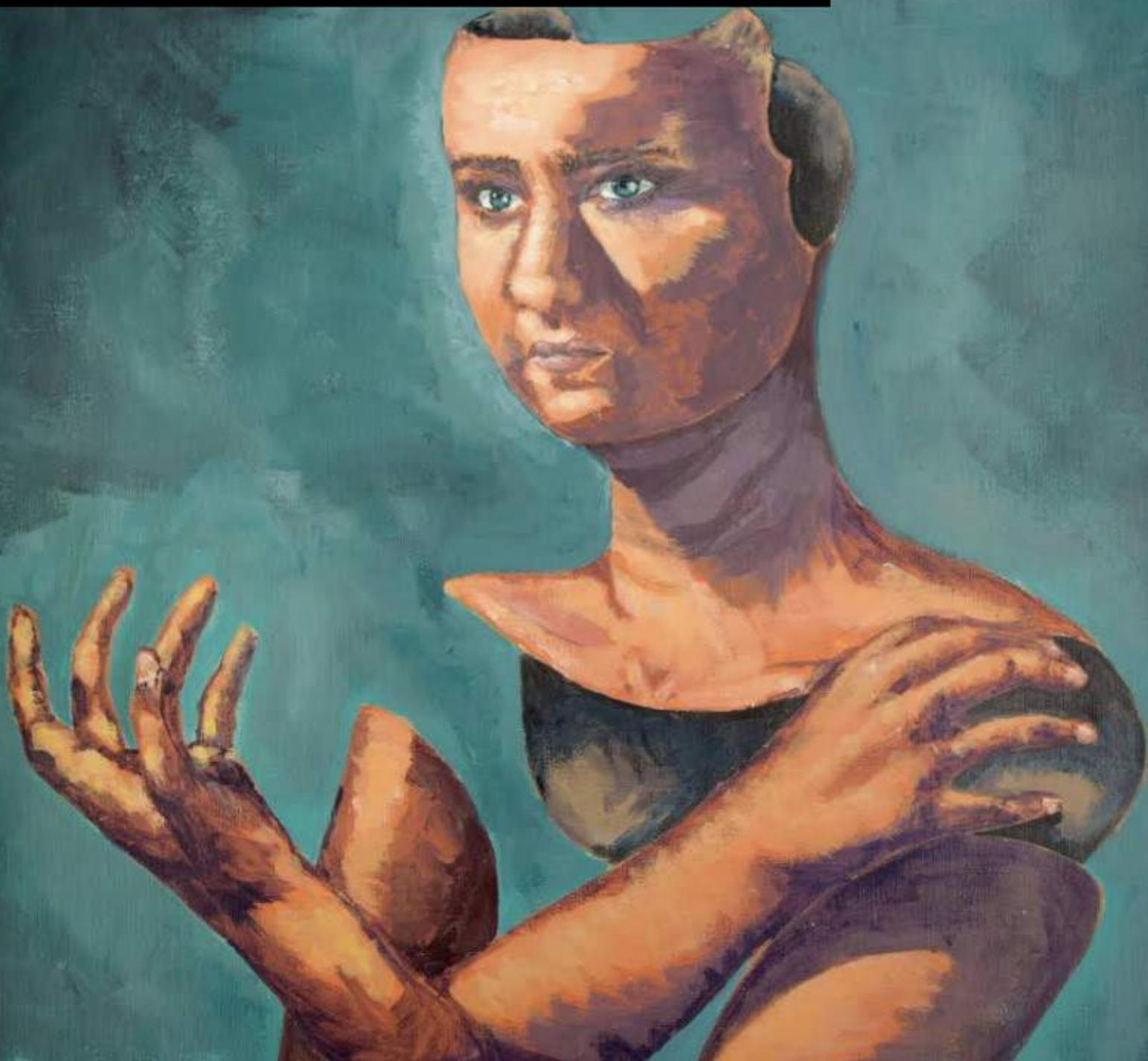


# WRITER'S BLOCK

SOMERVILLE  
HIGH SCHOOL'S  
LITERARY  
MAGAZINE



Issue 1, Volume 1

This literary magazine brought to you by...



Image by Nick Protopapas

The Somerville High School Writing Club was founded in 2015 by a core of students dedicated to offering a safe space at our school for writers, poets, and anyone else who likes to play with words. In addition to bi-monthly meetings where we read all about the ups and downs of being a writer and share our own work, we have also been working for the past year to revive Somerville High's creative writing magazine. We hope you enjoy the results, and if you are interested, please stop by a meeting or submit a piece for next year's magazine!

Xiomara Perlera  
Iliana Perlera  
Rosie Jacobs  
Marisa Kelath  
Fernando Quintanilla  
Celeste Torra  
Maria Aranibar

...and our advisor Ms. DeLury



# 2015-16 Writers Block Vol. 1 Issue 1

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Design by Anthony Arujo Amaral

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# The Game Winner ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Matheus Bragatto

One whole week preparing for this game. The Highlanders against the Everett Crimson Tide. The players warm up, the crowds of people flood in showing their school spirit -- Red and Blue. The thud of the band's drums echoes throughout the stadium. The loudest thud of all is the ball being kicked. The game is on.

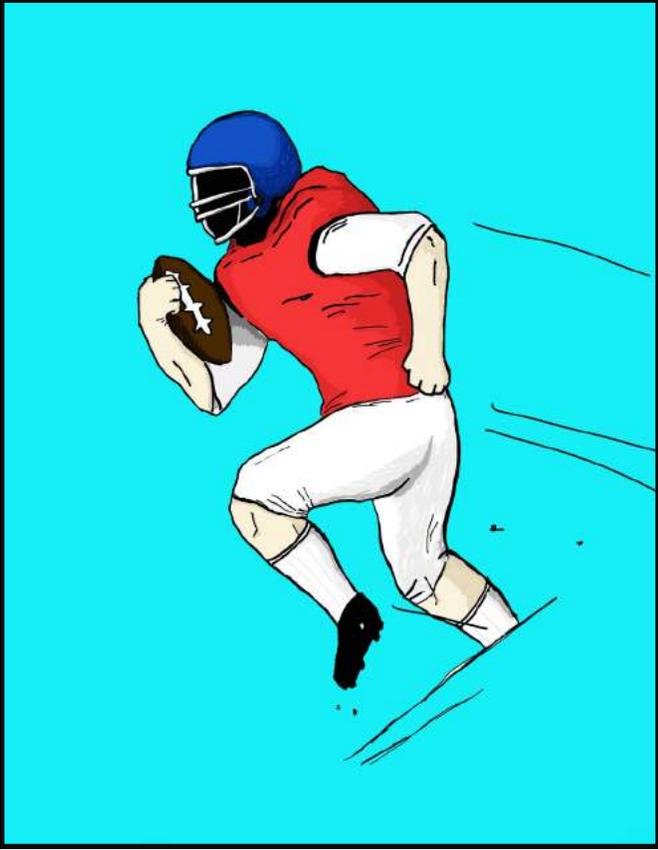
The fans cheer.

The Highlander defense is up and they attack as if they were a SWAT team breaking down a door and the painful hits throw the Crimson Tide around the field.

With every "hut" the defense gets more hyped while the ball is thrown so high in the air as if it was a rocket launched to the highest part of the sky. The ball comes down, the fans stand up. The ball falls into Highlander hands for a touchdown win.

The players taste their own blood and sweat. They needed to take that win.

"The Touchdown" by Nick Protopapas



"Never Give Up" by Christopher Martins

# Uncanny Homes ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

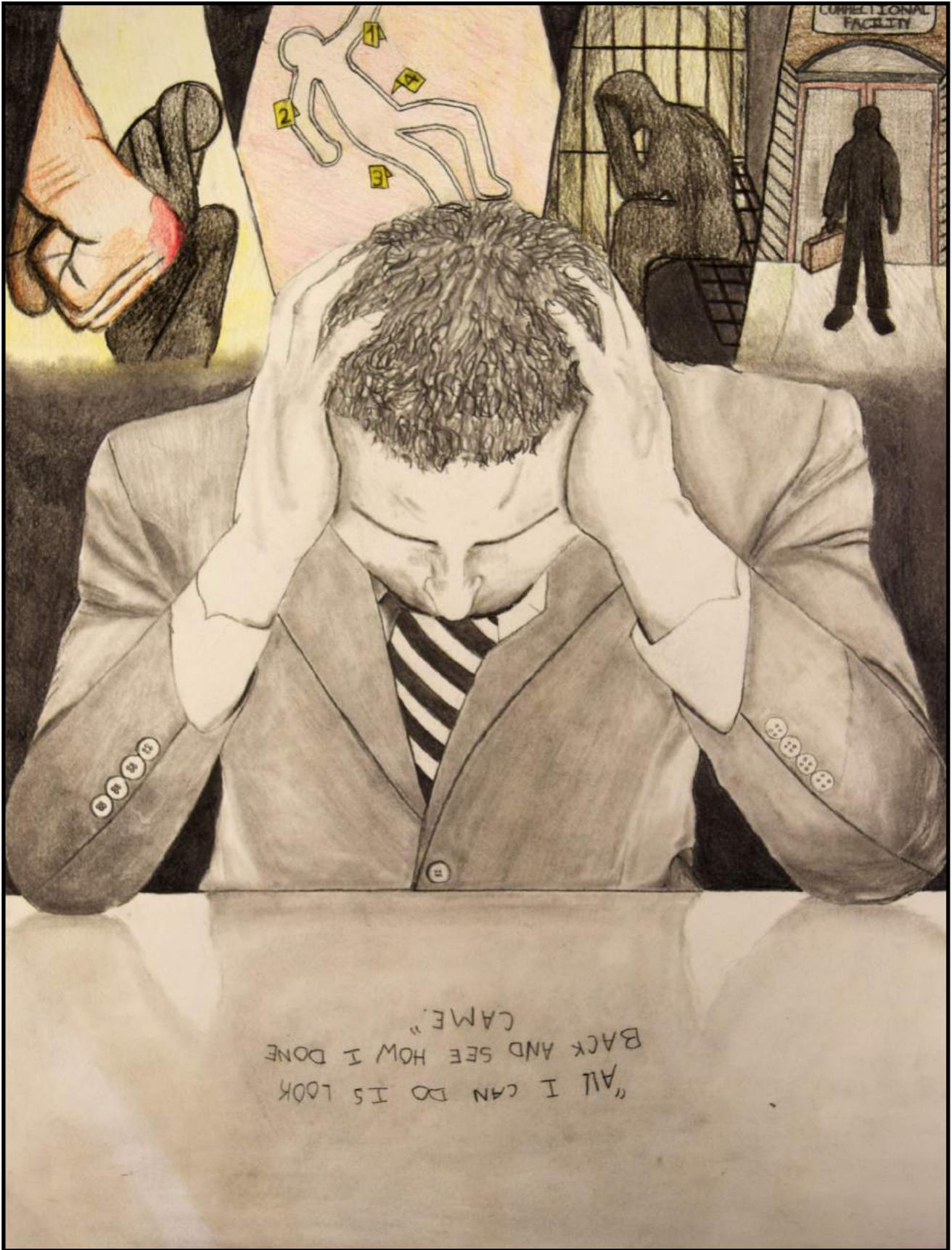
Allison Fillmore

A few miles off of the main road lay an old, crooked house. No one came anywhere near the area, mainly because it was out of the way from any major roads, and hidden out of sight. It sat alone, the only visible form of life was the trees and weeds grown around it, along with the overgrown yellow grass. The house was three stories high, with a brick chimney protruding out of the roof. The grey paint was peeled off at some points, and ivy grew up the left of the house. The porch steps were uneven, the middle slanted downwards and creaked whenever someone dared to step on it. A spider would scatter under the stairs when someone would get too close for its liking, and a clutter of moths hung around the dead porch light, as if they were waiting for it to turn on. The sinister house was quiet, and clouds seemed to deliberately hover overhead, threatening to rain. There was an occasional sound of a scattering animal in the distance, however no other sounds were heard. Whoever dared to step inside was hit with an odor that resembled a dirty clothes hamper, and the unlucky individual would yearn to be back outside in the cool, crisp air. You could almost taste the thickness of the air inside, which was clouded with dust and dirt from the years of being vacant.



"Untitled" by Nina Zou

♦ ♦



"ALL I CAN DO IS LOOK  
BACK AND SEE HOW I DONE  
CAME."

"Recollection" by Paul Hart

# A Poem about Writing Poetry ♦ ♦ ♦

Alduous Huxeley

I am a distressed student with writer's block.

I wonder why the words won't come to me.

I hear them fighting around in my brain, trying to escape through my pen.

Yet I see the awkward and uninspired phrases filling up line after line.

I want the words to gracefully cover the page, but they refuse.

I am a distressed student with writer's block.

I pretend that I know what I want to say.

I feel a deadline weighing down on my shoulders.

I touch the ideas that I strive for, but am unable to grab hold.

I worry that I'll never get this right.

I cry when the fountain of ideas runs dry, stranding me with a parched mind.

I am a distressed student with writer's block.

I can understand that anyone can write poetry.

I say that maybe I can too.

I dream of a deeper meaning, of metaphors and symbols.

I try to edit my words into something readable.

I hope to someday get over this fear and awkwardness.

I am a distressed student with writer's block.





"Japanese Sunrise Over Moscow" by Anthony Arujo Amaral







library that had English to Latin and vice versa character per character translations. Early that morning, I took my book with me to the stone and translated the text. The big text on the top of the stone read “The Five Realities”, while the smaller text, from left to right, read “Primeve, Ithersta, Pandora, Senersedee, and Mabuka” ‘Pandora’ was underlined, and depicted Earth as a planet in that reality. According to the stone, Pandora was the reality that I was currently in. The spinner-like rock was preset pointing to Ithersta.

I did not want to touch it, so I turned around to go back inside, but right when I looked down to my feet, I saw a very scary looking brown spider crawling on my right shoe, so I lifted my leg up and kicked it in the air. I sent the spider flying, but I was also so startled that I was falling backward onto the stone, and when I fell, I depressed the switch. The stone created a blur in the air after I fell on the switch and depressed it-like a stove was lit right below it. I wanted to see if the air was hot, so I stuck my hand in the blur above the stone. Then I got sucked into the blur of air. I did not know at that time, but I had left the third reality of Pandora through a portal, and I was on my way to the second reality of Ithersta. The stone was used for transit between realities. It was a transitive stone. After I was in the portal, I was unconscious for what seemed like lifetimes.

## Chapter 2: The Five Realities

I came to consciousness again in a room that seemed like a palace throne room. My eyesight was still blurry, but I could see a big similar stone to my left with the second lock-in place text underlined; Ithersta. I don’t remember my exact reaction, but I saw, that a beige root vegetable with arms, legs, eyes, a nose, a mouth, and armor was staring at me curiously. I would later learn that he was King Ziar of the second reality-Ithersta. I did not know where I was and I had many questions. Slowly, my vision came back to me. When it was quite clear, I decided I had to know more about my surroundings. There were immense geometric patterns in the floor, and on the walls, patterns of those white and shrouded beings as if they were gods. The palace I was in seemed to be infested with roots and dirt, as if it were a society of roots. Roots were throughout the building, being use to maintain structure, I assumed.

“Who are you?” I asked the root vegetable.

“I am King Ziar, King of the Second Reality of Ithersta. My, my, you really look like Alice, with so many questions to ask.”

“What do you mean?”

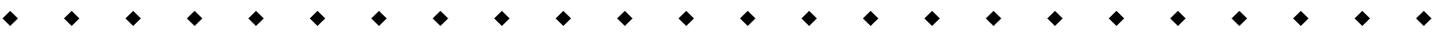
“Tumbling down the rabbit hole... Oh goodness, so you are a human from the third reality. This is not good considering that we are at war-“

“War?!”

“Never you mind of that. You’re safe here, and that’s what matters. We will try as quickly as possible to get you home.”

The being seemed to be peaceful and kind. I told it “I forgot to tell you, my name is Oswald Mandus. But I must ask: What do you mean by realities? Are there more than one?”

“Yes, the realities are planes of consciousness and existence that are supposed to be separated. There is Primeve, the first Reality of the Valokas, and then they created Ithersta, our second reality. After that, Pandora was created, which is where you came from. The fourth reality is known as Senersedee-home to the Kamalas; the enemies of the Valokas-their opposites. The fifth reality-Mabuka-is the end of light, whose creatures we are at war with-the manpigs. No person from the third reality should ever go to the fifth reality. What’s reasonable there may be the worst you ever experience. It was an accident that you stumbled upon us and were made



aware of our existence.”

“The stone I used was in the backyard of my house.”

“So it was not an accident then? Interesting. What time did you leave your reality again?”

“It was Thanksgiving day—a holiday.”

“Oh I see. But what led you to explore something you were so unfamiliar with.”

“It was a holiday—Thanksgiving—and the stone made a high frequency noise from the ‘keyhole’, so I stopped it with the key, but then the knob was preset on Ithersta, and a spider spooked me so I fell on top of the button, and didn’t know what the air blur was, and then I found out that it was a portal.”

King Ziar said, “I am sorry for the inconvenience of leaving your reality.”

I asked, “What are those beings on the wall?”

“They are the Valokas. Supreme light. They stand for all good and moral values. They are compassion. They are sympathy. They are kindness. They are caring. They are happiness. They created the realities and we worship them because of their guidance. Are things beginning to seem a little clearer now? I know the concept of realities is a little hard to grasp.”

I said, “No, I understand, I think. But why is it so bad that I am a human here at the time you are at war with the manpigs?”

“Humans too balanced. Too much good mixed with bad. The manpigs are bent on destroying everything that is good, everything that is against them and their evil. Pandorans—you, and Itherstanites—us, are more or less kind and good. The manpigs plot the destroying of us every chance they get. It is just hard for them to open a portal to our worlds because they need a human’s blood to do so. It is the only thing that locks their portals and the one thing that they will never get—a human. The manpigs of Mabuka use the Kamalas of Senersedee as mercenaries and spies. They live in the shadows. They are the only evil we have here, and are working on opening a portal from Mabuka to Ithersta so the Manpigs can destroy us easily. We have been at war with the bad and evil since the beginning, and if they get a human to open a portal, then we will not stand a chance against them.”

I confirmed, “So you are at war with both the manpigs and the Kamalas?”

“Yes we are.” I kind of understood it all, but right then, a smaller root vegetable—smaller than me, rushed into the room I was in, and notified the King that “The Kamalas have surrounded the palace, sir Ziar. What are we to do?”

Ziar responded, “We must use every soldier we have against the Kamalas.” I was hoping I could refrain from fighting, but apparently I must fight. “Human, for the sake of your own reality, you must come to fight as well. We can send you home after both our realities are safe. Right now, we are in a state of war, and you need to fight! Are you prepared?”

“Yes!” I said. I had no choice. If King Ziar was right, then the war would affect my home too, so I was obliged to fight. I asked him, “But Ziar sir—” he turned around, “How will I have time for all this? I mean time passing here is the same as time passing in my home world. If I don’t get back soon, my family will be worried about me, and my life might be ruined.”

King Ziar responded, “Mandus, what else is time but an infinitely layered reality? Right now, on this plot of space and time, we are talking to each other, but in a different space or not, at the same time or not,





However, the Kamala he was fighting was much stronger than him, and eventually overtook him. With its weapon of darkness-in the form of a spear-the Kamala stabbed through my little mate who I so desperately wanted to know better. And like the death I witnessed of the Kamala I killed, his death was similar, but the spot started out in shadow, and it enveloped him in shadow. Then after the darkness vanished, he lay on the ground. No voice. Plain and simply dead. Rest of his life cut short. No blood because he was a huge vegetable. He just had a small hole pierced through him with some pulp on the ground. I was near paralyzed at the madness I then knew went on. After a few Kamalas I fought with similar process, and the tiring fatigue from swinging the weapon forward then back, forward then back, I felt the weight of my cello pendant. I remembered the lovely Thanksgiving Day and the reality I yearned to return to. I asked myself 'Am I a soldier? Is this really worth it? Is this how I want to risk my life to get home? This is crazy. I need to get out of here.' Right then, as I was thinking that thought, a carrot, running for its life, and with no harmful intentions for me, ran past me, tripped me, and I was on the ground. Then another one came, and smacked its foot into my head on the way past. I was knocked out cold.



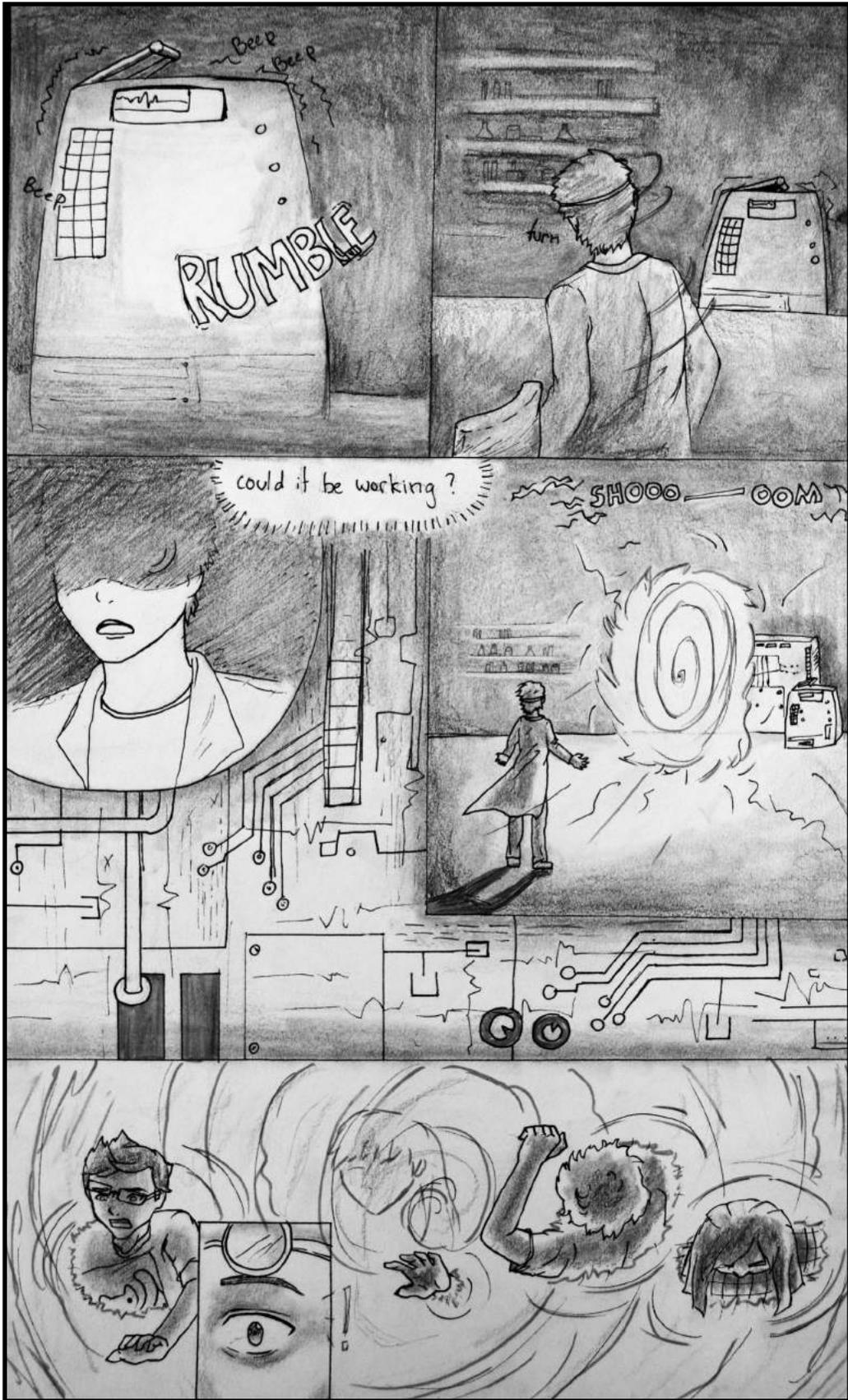


"Untitled" by Shivanshu Sharma

# Home ♦

Maria Aranibar

When I was five I went into a classroom where I was the only one with tanned skin,  
So I asked my mom why is that.  
She said we lived in a country where everyone is different from home and I will soon know  
This country could provide me more than home could ever.  
I spent year after year in the corner of a classroom isolated,  
Not knowing what the other kids were saying as they played.  
I felt like an unwanted present on Christmas Day.  
When I was seven I was sent to ESL and still the teacher could not translate what my paper said,  
By then I knew bits and pieces of English with no one to help me.  
I felt lost in a new cold world missing my home each and every day.  
And once I realized I knew what the kids were saying I wasn't happy.  
I felt like my hopes and dreams of this new country would be different, but they had been burned.  
They called me weird for the way my hair was braided down my back  
And how my skin was different from theirs, and how I was the only kid who hadn't been student of  
the month that year.  
It took me four damn years to learn English due to the fact that the school's policy was that  
I had to learn on my own and still perform at an academic grade level, even if I didn't know a single  
word of English.  
I was still a part of this cheated game where I had no advantage to succeed and the rest of the kids on  
the playground were born with the gift of comprehension and advantages because of the color of  
their skin.  
I spent year after year trying to get it through my mind at how this country could give me more than  
discrimination and anxiety and hatred for myself because I am different.  
When my aunts were lawyers and doctors back home,  
I could have been a princess showered in gold attending the best private schools and worn the best  
clothing.  
Here I am a peasant. Back home I am a queen.  
Tell me what this country can give me while my home gives me my family and acceptance.  
Here, I feel like a visitor in a place I should be calling home.



"Panel 3" by Fabriny Souza







safe and live her life in peace. Her journey to reach that place would become a timeless epic, a story that would never be erased from the mind of man.

He wrote the beginnings of his speech in the evening, interspersed with poetic musings on the moth that had gotten stuck in the light on his ceilings. The speech was nothing special; he had written many essays and articles in his life, and although he had never given a speech, it had the same faintly didactic, impersonal tone. By two in the morning he had written down the majority of the speech. Weeks later he would read it and wonder what had been going through his mind, but at that point in time it seemed perfectly logical. It was a long, descriptive passage about the illustrious founders of IntCon, who had brought order out of chaos and burned away the last vestiges of hatred with the beacon of justice. Martín wasn't sure where it had come from, and nor did he particularly care—his sole aim was to finish it as quickly as possible and return to his poem.

The sun came up over the mountains and he fell asleep as the birds chattered in the vine outside his window.

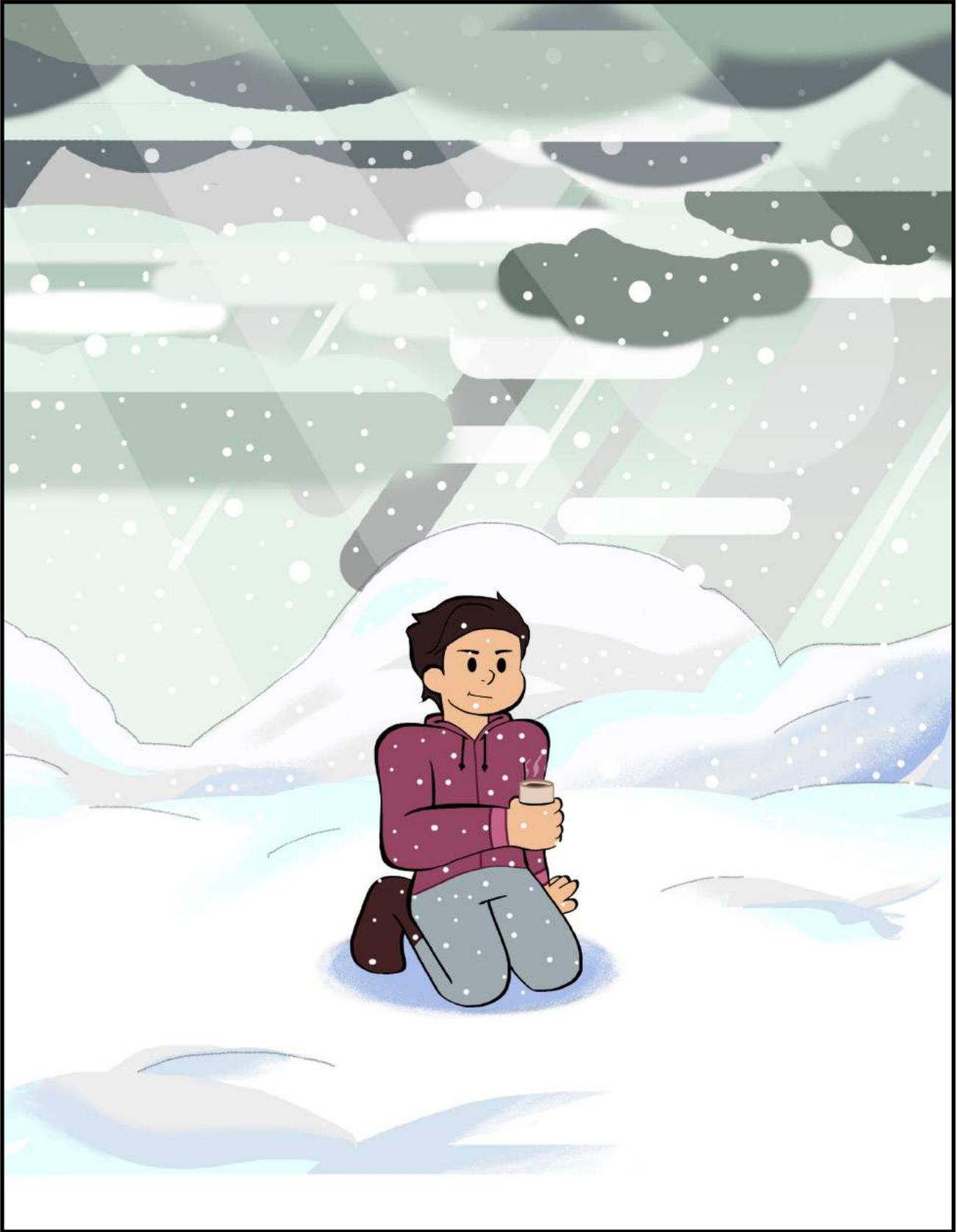




3  
BATTLE WITH  
**Rowan**

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ALEXI DELCID

"Battle with Rowan" by Alexi Delcid



"Hot Chocolate in the Cold" by Fernando Quintanilla

# Snow ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Nicole Santana

I can remember the wet star flakes  
On days where it becomes as beautiful as a star;  
People wearing warm coats  
And faces stunned against nature's fury.

I can remember the cold chills flowing through my body  
On days where the snow piles were higher than me.  
People wearing heavy coats, gloves, and hats  
And faces confused against nature's fury.

Anthony Giuffre

Henry Flores Amaya

I can remember days being gray  
On days where the sun was gone  
And people wearing snow jackets  
And faces mad against nature's fury

I can remember the big patch of snow when it felt like a soft white pillow  
On days where my back yard was like a winter wonderland  
People wearing boots and heavy, thick coats  
and faces were bloody red against nature's fury.

Frankie Leone











"Little Girl Lost" by Nina Zou

# In Moments of Great Solitude ♦ ♦ ♦

Samira Teixeira

I like to hole myself up in the stagnant air  
of missed opportunities. The brittle wind echoes  
through the chamber of a half-empty room. My mouth  
is out of practice, my eyes have fully adjusted to the thick mist of rain.  
This is it, old friend, the resolution of my sternly naked  
belly in sleep, marking down the dreams it refuses to record.

The needle skips over my empty record,  
I should learn to breathe again; I should get out for air.  
Loss has forced us to acknowledge the naked  
water of things so solid before, but my echo  
of an existence lies still as the rain  
floods the picture windows and covers my mouth.

*Things that happen, they are so-* the hungry mouths  
of my windows are wide open, eagerly recording  
the little deaths of birds and reveries and rain,  
they tally them up, the sadists, paint the air  
with heavy fragrances of open wounds, the echoes  
of a million beings facing the moon, ill-equipped, utterly naked.





# A letter to a 13-year-old girl ♦ ♦

Xiomara Perlera

**Dear little girl,**

Congratulations, you have just turned 13. You're probably wondering how the next few years of your life will go. And you're probably wondering how, from this moment, everything has changed, from how you view yourself to where you see yourself five years from now. I'm sorry to say this, but you can't see yourself at the age of 18. You might tell yourself "there's no way I'll make it to 18, I'll be lucky if I make it to 16," but you will only say that because from the moment you turn 13 your demons will wake up. Those demons will want to play a game but you have to learn to not play their game, because if you do, you'll be up at two a.m. crying. I don't mean a few tears. I mean you're bawling your eyes out as you list all of your flaws, all of your imperfections, all of the things you hate about yourself. And as you count your list you will keep asking yourself the same questions over and over again: "Why am I never pretty enough? Why am I never smart enough? Why am I never good enough? Why am I never enough?" You will say all of this as you hold yourself because even though you hate yourself so much, you know that all you really have is yourself and if you're not okay with yourself then there's a problem. But you also won't understand how a single person could have so much hate for themselves and it will hurt so much to even look in the mirror and try to convince yourself that you are beautiful. It will feel like a lie.

But there is some good news! You will eventually learn how to play your demons game. You will start to realize that all this time you have given your demons the power to control every single one of your thoughts, and you will realize that nothing is going to change unless you change. And eventually, you'll admit to yourself that you are starting to really like the girl who stares back at you in the mirror. You'll start to see the beauty you hold within yourself, and you'll tell yourself "I'm not gonna give up. I'm not gonna let my demons gain back the power they once had over me. "

The battle will over but the war will just be starting. You are ready to fight.

Sincerely,

**A 16-year-old girl who will never give up**





"Waiting for Summer" by Celeste Torra