

# THE MAGAZINE



**Magruder High School**  
Literary and Visual Arts Magazine

Spring 2017

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*“In the end  
only three things matter:  
how much you loved,  
how gently you lived,  
and how gracefully you let go  
of things not meant for you.”*

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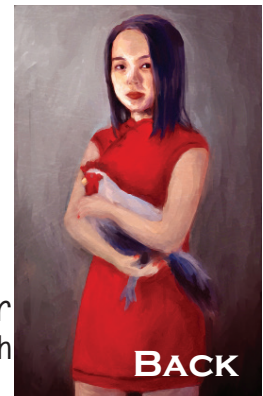
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Girl with The Gas Mask  
So Hyeon Gwag

Girl with Rooster  
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# Bookends

Kaci Gossard

I found myself lost among the towering metal shelves.  
Dewey had me stumped four aisles ago, somewhere between cookbooks and  
creation.

All motives now lost, wandering became my purpose among the daunting  
stacks of endless knowledge,

I knocked something astray as I turned a corner  
and books fell, dusty pages propelling down overhead.

In the sea of fallen knowledge, I was swallowed in the carnage of paper cut  
casualties.

## Anticipation

Yashelle Hunte

She is a cruel mistress,  
The older sister of Patience,  
Time's greatest ally and enemy.  
To all who wait, she burdens,  
To all who sleep, she wakes.  
Sweet relief from her departure.  
If Patience is a virtue, what is she?  
She chases off sheep in the night,  
She taps her feet in the day.  
To all who suffer through,  
Few say it was worth the wait.



*how he loses her*

Sakeenah Dasti

his hands clench into tight knots-- there is anger there,  
a furious tension that tears. you can almost taste the  
bitter revelations on the tip of his tongue. you watch,  
and he watches, and the girl simply walks away.

there's something about the way that his  
head hangs-- hands claw in misery  
at the strands of hair at the base of his neck.  
and so you try to pull back, pull away,  
step back into the shadows of this dark street.  
can you shield yourself from the intimacy  
of this sacred moment, his and his alone?  
you try to look away and yet you cannot.

now there is heat, now there is fire. a simmering  
rage, pent up desire. it numbs you inside out.  
this stillness beats far louder than words could.  
like a horse's canter, it is hard and fast and alive.



# To Have a Dream

Michelle Hoang



# I Miss Y(our) Home

Sadie Lulei

July 1st 5:13pm

*(Can you believe it's been half a year?)*

Dear you,

I'm writing you this letter from my grandparents' house. They've lived in this house since my mom was a kid and I've spent my entire life loving everything about it, from the holes in the wood floor of the foyer to the trampoline in the backyard that hasn't moved in fifteen years. It is as much a part of me as I am a part of everything else. Moving a lot as a kid, this was the one place I considered my home. And this is my last time ever being in this house.

It's weird, part of me wants to walk around it slowly and trace my fingers along every dent and painted-over wall where once, when I was five, I drew pictures in crayon. But the house is not a person and I can't just kiss it goodbye. I took an entire roll of film pictures of it and I think that will help, but it still doesn't do justice for my emotions. I'm sad.

I will never love a home the way I love this home. I can't even see myself buying a house when I'm older. I'm an apartment person; my life has always been able to accommodate a simple amount of things. Houses are for those who want more, who want to make the memories that turn a house like this into a museum of intangible memories. I want that but I'm sitting here and even the thought of leaving hurts too much to bare.

This house is Thanksgiving meals and Christmas mornings and the night before the first day of school and chlorine-soaked, freshly-freckled skin while eating lunch. It's family meals and laughter and the one year I spent my birthday crying in the guest bedroom. And the worst part is, I already know that these moments are made of the people. I know that we could live in any house and still have all these memories sunk deep in the walls. But I can't let go. I'm convinced if I made a hole in the drywall and dug deep enough, I would see all those memories. I would be able to watch the first time I learned to tie my shoe and the time my brother first walked in freshly fallen snow when he was three.

I'm scared of change. I wish I wasn't. I wish I was someone who embraced it open-armed. But the idea of this house belonging to someone else who might not love it as much as I do, it makes me sad enough to cry.

I'm scared of moving out and making my own home somewhere. I don't know if I can. When I was a kid, I used to have a tiny Powerpuff Girls backpack. I put everything I thought I needed in it. A flashlight, a string, a paperclip, my favorite rock, other stupid little things I thought were important. That way if I for some reason couldn't go home I could survive. I didn't need to be attached to one place.

But now I'm seventeen and I leave the house with only my phone and I don't tell my mom when I'm coming home. I don't know if I'll miss my house, because maybe it isn't as important to me as my grandparents' house, but maybe I'm just scared of trying to make something as valuable and special as this. I don't think I can.

Anyways, I love you. You're the only one I could tell this to. And you're probably the only one who will truly understand. I think I will always love you, no matter what happens. I'm sure of that, and I'm not sure I can explain why.

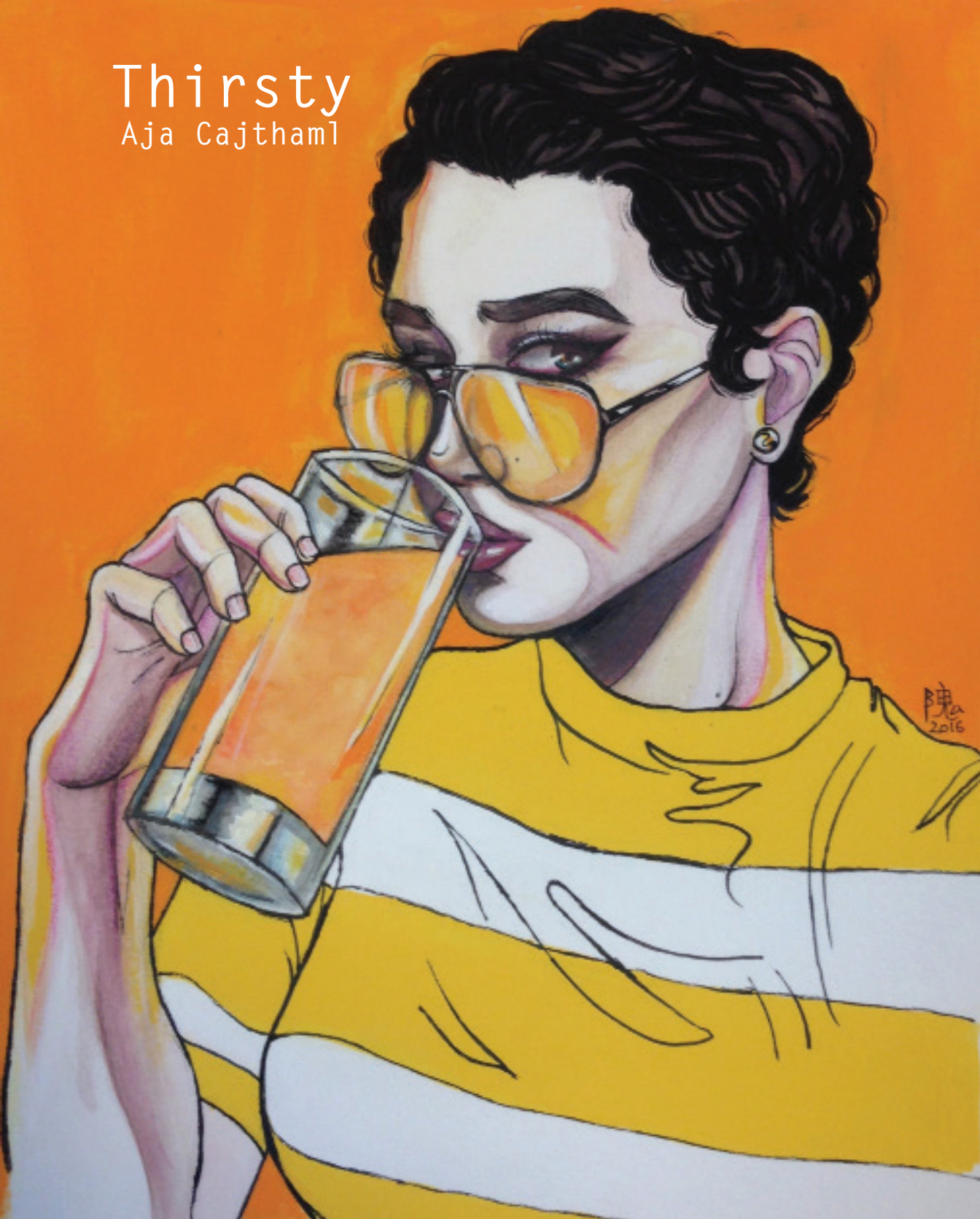
I think you are a home.

Sincerely yours,  
Sadie Olivia

P.S. I had a dream that I went back to that beach house you and I sort of fell in love in. It was entirely empty, though. There was no one around for miles. I walked to the beach and I was the only one for miles and the waves crashed just the same, the birds still glided on gusts of sandy wind, and the clouds still moved in the sky like they were meant for nothing else. I kept staring at the horizon. The sun was setting. I think I saw you.

# Thirsty

Aja Cajthaml



# To Traverse a River

Susan Chen

My native tongue  
Is not a river  
That flows with ease.  
It thunderously crashes  
With branching twists and turns  
That blind my swimmer's eye.

The river is not a comfort  
To me  
A rabbit  
Destined to stray from water.

I'm told to learn,  
Learn to tame the waters,  
Learn to match its flow.  
Master the stroke  
Of the ancient brush  
That runs in our family blood.

I've seen many  
Women and men  
Reduced to feeble children  
Before the great river.



No fool will  
Tackle the water  
With just their body.  
A fool who does  
Will find themselves  
Drowned and swallowed up.



# Water

Aja Cajthaml

# Soccer Moms

Lorayn Aponte

EXT: SOCCER FIELD SIDELINE - DAY

Enter HEATHER with her son, JAMES before soccer game.

HEATHER:

Honey, you got this. Just look that ball in the eye and kick it like there's no tomorrow.

JAMES:

Mom, that's--you just--God, Mom...

HEATHER:

What, James? Be serious. This is a serious game. I have money on this. I am not losing to Donna on the other soccer team again. They don't even have their own gatorade cooler.

JAMES:

Geez, Mom. Could you lower your voice?

HEATHER:

I think what you need to do is outplay the sucker-- just do it.

(Lowers voice and looks around)

You know kicking and shoving isn't a bad thing. Just give him a quick little push-- he won't know what's coming.

JAMES:

Mom, enough--I get it.

HEATHER:

Honey, I just want you to do good. Besides, I'm rooting for you--look at my shirt.

(Displays shirt that says, "I'm James' momma and the boys go hubba bubba")

JAMES:

Mom, that doesn't even make sense.

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(Displays shirt that says, "I'm James' momma and the boys go hubba bubba")

JAMES:

Mom, that doesn't even make sense.

HEATHER:

All I'm saying is I wouldn't buy myself this "#1 soccer mom" keychain if it weren't true.

JAMES:

If you could please just simmer down--I'm gonna

HEATHER:

My lips are not fake, you bobblehead bimbo. At least I know when to stop applying self-tanner.

EXT: SOCCER FIELD - DAY

JAMES is on the field, next to TANNER, a member of the other team.

JAMES:

Ha, look at your mom. She looks like she's about to punch my mom.

TANNER:

Ten dollars your mom beats my mom up this week.

JAMES:

Mm, I don't know about that. Your mom gave my mom a pretty nasty black eye last game.

TANNER:

Okay, you have a point. Wait--look, look! There goes the ref.

EXT: SOCCER FIELD SIDELINE - DAY

The REF approaches DONNA and HEATHER, fighting on the sideline.

REF:

Heather! Heather--stop--okay--let go--no, not her arm, Heather--her hair--let go OF HER HAIR, WOMAN. Now I have no choice but to kick you out again.

DONNA:

HA! Bye Bye!

REF:

You're getting kicked out too, Donna.

JAMES:

(James comes to the sideline.)

Come on, Mom. You can buy me that new xbox game to make up for it.





# Rhinos

Nikki Israel

# Blue Jay

Nikki Israel



# Magic

Devin Goodman

Streetlamps glow a dull orange,  
lights in windows extinguished,  
the world asleep as you roam.

Fresh snow caves under your exploring boots,  
the sun rises over towering treetops,  
your surroundings soft and silent.

Still branches against a moonlit sky,  
the light rustle of nocturnal creatures,  
piercingly loud in the silence.

Soft pressure of warm water,  
sunlight begins to fade,  
as you slip deeper into murkiness.

The shimmering forest vanishes,  
aquatic life emerges around you,  
thoughts of the human world erased.

Lost in these precious places,  
within rare and mystical moments,  
reality is not quite real.



# Marionette's Ties

Nashare Butts

Cameras flash, his head bowed. Voices come at him from every direction but he can't decipher what they're saying. The only thing he can see in front of him is the large form of a bodyguard. Behind him, he can feel the presence of his father. The voices around him are loud, but none of them sound coherent. He's forced to stop from the large man in front of him, so his head is forced up as well as he looks at his surroundings for the first time. The fans are reaching for him and he smiles, it's the least he can do when he feels the piercing stare on his back. Each fan looks like the next. He moves closer, in order to sign whatever was jammed into his hand. It's a constant state of déjà vu as he's being grabbed at from all sides. Ahead of him, the fans see a glimpse of him and go into a frenzy, pushing against the restraints.

It all happens in a flash. He's barely done signing yet another phone case when there's a collective gasp. He barely has any time to see what's happened before he's being pushed back. He's being lead even faster through the crowd and that's when he sees her. A girl on the ground pushed down by the craze of the fans. She doesn't look hurt, but she does look overwhelmed, which isn't surprising. She's small and she looks like a child compared to the crowd. In the moment, there are no consequences on his mind as he reaches around Rick in order to reach the girl. Before he can even get to her, the collar of his shirt is being pulled back roughly, as if he's a dog on a leash. Before he can even think of protesting, he's being pushed through the crowd, forced to ignore the screams.

The yelling was replaced with deafening silence. A few people in the lobby of the hotel stared at him before continuing on their way. He can feel the tense air, even if no one has spoken since they've left the car. There's not even a moment for him to process what just happened before they begin leading him to the elevator. His mind is racing, a bunch of thoughts reaching the forefront of his brain but none of them sticking. His body acts on its own as he rips out of the grip held on him. He turns, prepared to push past anyone who gets in his way. He runs squarely into Woojin Lee, who towers over him now, even in early adulthood. Due to his instinct, he cowers back from the intimidating stare that he's met with.

"Where do you think you're going, Jihyeon?" Woojin's voice is stern, as it usually is. Roman flinches at the use of his birth name. His father was the only one who still called him that name. He had killed that part of himself years ago.

"You're going to let that girl stay on the ground?" he says in response. His heart is slamming in his chest and he vaguely realizes that his hands are shaking. It always begins like this. This is usually where he stops being confident.

"We have a schedule to follow, Jihyeon. We have more important things to focus on." Woojin moves to grasp Roman's arm again, but Roman jerks back at the last moment. In the back of his mind, he knows that this is a bad idea. Standing up to his father never ends up well for him.

"No." His voice is straight, which is a surprise to both him and his father. It's a contrast to how he feels inside. He takes a deep breath, continuing before his father can speak.

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"No." His voice is straight, which is a surprise to both him and his father. It's a contrast to how he feels inside. He takes a deep breath, continuing before his father can speak. "No. I'm going to help that girl."

"If you walk out that door, Jihyeon, you're going to regret it." His voice is low, but with a dangerous lilt that makes Roman shiver. Despite that fear that ripples through him, he stands straighter, staring his father straight in the eye. He ignores the instinct to look away, standing his ground for once. Without another word, he pushes past his father,

pushing open the hotel door.

The bright sunlight fills his vision for a moment before he can see clearly. He takes in the size of the crowd for the first time, eyes zeroing in on the girl who was on the ground a few minutes earlier. Tears flow down her face which is a contrast to all the other happy faces. He moves forward through the crowd, even though he's putting himself at risk by doing so. In the moment he's too filled with adrenaline to care.

He's reaching the girl and he gently holds her, since she's not behind the barricade just yet. It's obvious that she's not expecting him to be there since her eyes have grown comically wide. He ignores the surrounding crowd for just a moment, even as they tug at his person.

"Are you okay?" he asks over the screaming, a worried expression forming on his face. She doesn't appear to have any immediate injuries, but he asks anyway to make sure. Unable to answer, she just nods. "I'm really sorry, I didn't mean for any of that to happen. I really hope you're okay."

"I-I'm fine, thank you," she finally speaks, tears flowing down her face again. She's holding to him as if he's the only thing keeping her grounded and if she lets go, he'll disappear. He doesn't mind because he holds her right back. "Th-thank you so much."

"No, thank you. For being here. I know that must have been a scary experience. But I hope you don't hate me too much," he jokes, giving her a reassuring smile. She returns it as she leans forward to hug him. Warmth fills him immediately and he wraps his arms tightly around her small frame. He's not pulled away moments later, so he savors the feeling.

It's a rarity that he ever gets to stop and make a connection with his fans. Usually, due to some schedule that he was never a part of. The main part of the reason that he loves what he does is because he gets to connect with people who connect with him and find solace in his music. Not being able to thank them and have genuine conversations with them frustrate him to no end. Unfortunately, his father was a man who put business above everything, leaving no room for compassion in his heart. He couldn't stand up to that man for so many years and even the thought of doing so scares him to no end. But this is it; he is done being nothing more than a puppet to management. He has to put his foot down sometime.

"What's your name, honey?" he asks, softly. Up close, she does look more like a child, with her round face and large, round eyes. She's significantly smaller than him and it doesn't help that her clothes look too big for her body, making her appear even smaller.

"Rose. M-my name is Rose." She answers, voice muffled by her tears. She's trying desperately to wipe her face, to prevent herself from looking even more like a fool in front of her idol.

"Nice to meet you, Rose."

He smiles, reassuring her that he doesn't have a problem with her current state. "I'm really glad I got to meet you. I hope to talk to you some more."

He gives her one final squeeze before pulling away in order to really look at the crowd in front of him. It is almost like he was on stage, but this time their faces are clear. He can see each and every one of their faces and how happy they seemed to be here. His heart swells with appreciation and adoration for these people. "Please be careful." He speaks to the girl one last time, who nods with a smile before he helps her back over the

barricade. He ushers for the crowd to be quiet and within a few moments, it's pin-drop silent.

“Thank you all so much for being here. I know a lot of you have been here since early hours of the morning and it means a lot that you would lose sleep because of me. But try not to do it too much. Your health is much more important than me.” A rise of noise begins, but he quickly silences them again. “Thank you, really, though. Seeing your faces is the best thing about doing this. It's really rough sometimes, but I'm so grateful to have people like you guys supporting me. But please be careful, we don't want someone getting seriously hurt. I want you all to be safe, okay? Can you promise me that?” A smile blossoms on his face as the crowd cheer in agreement.

His temporary bliss is interrupted by arms pulling at him again and his heart sinks. He doesn't even have to look to know what's happening. He tries to keep the smile on his face, but it's pointless because it's gone. He allows himself to be carried back in, but not without waving to the crowd who reaches out to him. And then all the sound is gone and he's face to face with his father.



# You

So Hyeon Gwag

# Riley

Kate Rempe

Friday, April 28th

6:00 PM

“Riley? Riley Masters?” an assistant called from around the corner of the waiting room entrance. I looked up from the magazine I had been reading, and nodded in confirmation.

“Right here,” I replied.

“It’s nice to see you again, Ms. Masters. Dr. Franklin is ready for you now.”

She ushered me to Dr. Franklin’s office, something I considered to be fairly amusing. It’s not like I didn’t know where it was. It had been my location every Friday evening for the past 3 months. She was just doing that thing that people working with mental illness patients do; creating and maintaining a comfortable environment, as if to say, “Yes, this is still the same hallway. Yes, you’re still meeting with the same doctor. No, you’re not crazy.” There was a kind of chastisement to it, but it wasn’t ineffective. I never complained.

We reached Dr. Franklin’s office, and the assistant opened the door for me, and left once I entered the office. Despite being overly accommodated to it, the room was never strictly “comfortable” to me. It had a couch on the side wall, one of those little futons that looks like you should be able to sink into it, but is actually just stiff no matter how much wear it gets. A small coffee table sat next to the futon, with a couple of similarly faux cushy chairs accompanying it. A pitcher of water and a plastic cup decorated the table, resting on little coasters and gathering up condensation rings. Then there were the framed doctorate degrees that Doctor Deborah Franklin, PhD had acquired in her life, and beneath them, the bookshelves. Sterile, white bookshelves, perfectly ordered with informational books on therapeutic methods, psychological experiments and their findings, and the latest edition of *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. The degrees and the bookshelves threw off the comforting facade every time. They were a stagnant reminder that this was a therapist’s office and that I had a mental disorder. I sat down at my usual corner of the unquishable futon and waited for Dr. Franklin.

“Riley?” Dr. Franklin asked as she entered the office from the back room. She walked over and sat down across from me at one of the chairs.

I nodded.

“It’s good to see you, Riley. How was your week?”

She folded her hands together, crossed her legs, and leaned slightly forward. She always seemed so genuinely interested in what I had to say. Like she was waiting for me to tell her something monumental had happened. Whether fortunately or unfortunately for her eager ears, I always told her the same thing.

“This week was fine.”

It had been my answer for a number of weeks now, since I had gotten past the initial diagnosis phase. Mainly it was just frequent headaches, some confusion here and there, and memory loss. Lots, of memory loss, although there was less now. When Dr. Franklin finally concluded that I had D.I.D., and started putting us through what she referred to as “meetings,” my alters and I (my “system” according to Dr. Franklin) were more



in tune with one another. Once that had happened, it was like I said; I was doing fine.

She nodded, and smiled again, glad that I had not experienced anything too horrific. I had brushed the question off easily enough, but deep down I was glad too. I remembered the pre-diagnosis, pre-therapy, pre-sanity phase when I had been terrified of myself. The memory loss and the headaches and the dissociation gave me horrible anxiety, and no one could explain to me what was wrong. This, in turn, gave me even more anxiety. I thought I was going crazy, and even though my friends and my family had told me with their mouths that I wasn't, their eyes suggested otherwise.

Dr. Franklin had been my relief. I found the therapy office near me and scheduled an appointment; desperate for an answer, and anxious that even they wouldn't know what was wrong with me. I sat down in Dr. Franklin's office for the first time in that uncomfortable futon and she asked me some questions, and told me that I wasn't crazy. I looked in her eyes and they assured me her words were true. She told me that there was a mental illness called Dissociative Identity Disorder, and that I might have it, and that she wanted to schedule regular meetings with me so we could figure out how to tackle it together and find some real answers. With just a few words, she gave me the solace I needed. With that, to me, she was not just Deborah Franklin. She was Deborah Franklin, the reincarnation of Jesus Christ.

I looked back at my Jesus, who was currently looking at me intently, and patiently, to see if there was anything else I wanted to say. When I confirmed that I was done, and it was her turn, she smiled, and continued.

"That's good, that's really good," she said, "And how has your memory been?"

"They've mostly stopped withholding memories from me, and I tend to just sort of take the back seat when they take control." I told her about Wednesday, when Emma stole two bags of chocolates from the CVS down the street. I resurfaced on my couch that evening with wrappers all over me and the floor, cradling the unopened bag in my arms and suffering a raging sugar headache. I went back to the store the next day and left some money on the counter to pay for the chocolate.

Dr. Franklin laughed at that. She always liked Emma. She was hard to deal with at times for me--I had never been totally comfortable with the idea of a reckless 8 year-old girl being in control of my body--but she wasn't all bad. Besides, it gave me a reasonable excuse to stock Froot Loops and Kool-Aid in the house. Not to mention, it was comforting to know that at least some part of me was still blissfully innocent and carefree.

Isaac appeared at the same time as Emma, and Dr. Franklin and I had begun referring to them as "the twins" whenever we discussed them together. Despite the label, the two were almost nothing alike, and as a result, they balanced each other out. Isaac was timid, where Emma was her own personal sunshine. Isaac was solemn, and cried often. He took over less frequently than Emma, and appeared only when I or one of my other alters was really upset. I would feel myself drift away, and suddenly Isaac was there, hiding away in my room, crying softly into my pillow and cradling a teddy bear I had had since I was a child. It was not often he let me cry for myself. He absorbed my pain, and cried my tears as his own until there were none left in me. Then he would retreat back into my mind, untraceable save for a few whispers on occasion to Emma and Carnell in the back of my head.

Carnell was different. When he took over, I was gone.

# i woke up without you again

Sadie Lulei

i've felt this before.  
what i mean is, this is nothing new.  
i have, undoubtedly, fallen in love.  
yes, with you. yes, because we made eye contact, once.  
of course it's not love at first sight.  
it's not love at all, but it's something else.  
intrigue, definitely, infatuation, possibly,  
but love is something people like us don't touch.  
i mean, we almost touch it.  
we wave our arms around, like children,  
stretching as far as we can for what's inches away from  
our fingertips.  
but we are never close enough.  
we already knew this.

and we keep playing this game.  
it's like monopoly, really, because everyone wants to start  
but no one wants to finish.  
so we keep playing this game, and i tell you that  
"your eyes are my favorite color,"  
and that  
"not a second goes by that i don't think of you."  
i even say that i miss you,  
sometimes,  
when you're pretending to be asleep.  
i know you're awake.

we can write these poems,  
we can pretend that they'll cure anything,  
a placebo antidote for how little we feel.  
imagine us, would you?  
imagine us walking on the beach in the middle of winter,  
imagine us holding hands and laughing like newlyweds,  
imagine us in love.  
i do sometimes, do you?  
imagine us knowing how, exactly, to love.

i guess what i'm trying to say is that  
before there is a pause, there is a play,  
and at some point we had to have been moving forward,  
our feet had to have met in motion,  
rhythmically as if we knew, somehow,  
what we were doing.  
but those steps were just coincidences,  
not fate.  
and i've been here before,  
on the edge of this ocean with the water at my toes,  
and it's winter so it starts to snow,  
and i love you,  
and we both know.



# Baby Driver

Jenny Opiela

# The Butterfly's Wings

Michelle Feliz-Contreras

I looked out the window, wondering how I got to be so lucky. My fingers wrapped around my butterfly necklace that my mother had given me when I was younger. She had been the reason that I worked so hard to become a surgeon. Outside, snow was falling, indicating that winter had arrived. Somebody knocked on the door, startling me, as my thoughts disappeared.

"Come on in," I said, as a tall man walked in. He had on a lab coat, showing that he was a doctor.

"Hello," he said with a gorgeous smile. "Sorry to interrupt you, chief, but there's a mass casualty incident nearby and the E.R and O.R's are waiting to hear from you. What would you like me to tell them?" he said, nervous.

"Make sure all O.R's are clear unless the procedure is urgent. Also make sure most of the E.R beds are clear for the patients coming in. What exactly happened?" I asked.

"High-school shooting. So tragic," he said, lost in thought, and then rushing out of the office. I grabbed my coat, pager, and phone and ran to the E.R. What a terrible way to start my first day, I thought.

.....

I got down to the E.R as the ambulances were rolling in. Parents and family members were everywhere. Most crying and others comforting. My heart ached. All these innocent kids. So many questions crossed my mind as to why somebody would do this. Reporters were outside, distracted by the police so that they wouldn't bother the doctors.

"Hey chief, we need a little help down here," a nurse yelled to me. I rushed to the room that the nurse had called from. A teenage girl lay on the table. She was shot twice.

"We're going to take her up right away" I said to the doctors. I turned to the girl, and said "Hey sweetie, My name's Camila, Doctor Gonzalez. I need you to be strong for me right now, okay?" I said.

She tried to speak, but struggled.

"Do you mind if I hold... on to.... your.... necklace?" she said, gasping for air. The butterfly must've meant something to her, as it did for me. I took the necklace off of my neck, and handed it to her.

"I expect this back when you're recovering, okay?" I said, smiling. She smiled back to me, as the anesthesia kicked in, the butterfly wrapped around her small fingers.

.....

In the O.R, it was home to me. I always focused hard in there, even if it was just reading a book or doing paperwork.

"Pass me the 9-blade," I said to the nurses. I grabbed it carefully and cut, slowly into the skin. Her heart rate then escalated.

"Pass me the defibrillator" I said to the nurse. "Charge to 200," I said. One...Two... Three...Clear. I shocked her once. I tried multiple times, but her heart rate wouldn't go back to it's normal beat.

“You’re my butterfly, we’re going to make it through this. I said to her, starting to cry a little.

I tried, over, and over. I couldn’t be the one to have her die without knowing that I did everything that I could possibly do to save her. I could tell that she was a strong kid, and that she didn’t understand what was happening. I felt a connection to her, which was why I tried so hard to help her.

“I think it’s time to let her go, chief” one of the nurses said to me. The hardest thing about being a surgeon is saying the three words that ends somebodies life.

“Time of death, Two twenty-eight,” I said, walking out of the place that I was starting to hate a little.

I couldn’t deal with anymore patients. I walked back to my office, trying to figure out what could’ve possibly done wrong. She had passed, and I was left with mixed emotions. I had made a promise that I didn’t get to fulfill.



# Fireflies

Aja Cajthaml

# Aiden & Cleo

Maddie Jennings

It is 2:45 in the morning and the warm, summer air is just perfect enough for a short walk through the neighborhood. Aiden walks down Cleo's street with a cigarette in his hand and a gift in the other. He smokes as he is looking up into the sky, imagining what could happen next. After a little bit, he approaches her window.

AIDEN

Hey... oh.

CLEO is laying in her bed asleep, facing upwards towards her tapestry she had gently laid across the top of the canopy on her bed. Emily Yacina's "Soft Stuff" is playing on her phone that she had fallen asleep with. Aiden slowly approaches her and looks at her with such a deep, admiring gaze. He crawls under the covers and lies next to her.

CLEO

Hi.

(sighs with relief and grows a big smile)

I'm so happy to see you!

Cleo rolls over on top of Aiden and hugs him. She lays there for a long while as he rubs her back.

AIDEN

Emily Yacina always sets the mood.

(laughing)

I missed you so much, Cleo.

CLEO

Something about her just makes me really feel things, you know? Every time I hear her sing or a simple tune made by her, I instantly feel emotionally... more than I already do.

(laughs)

Anyways, I missed you too. How was it? How was everything? These past few weeks have felt like years.

AIDEN

California is California... Always beautiful, exciting, and comforting. It is a radiant place and I am really sad to leave, but at least I get

to be home.

CLEO

Of course, I'm happy to hear that.

Cleo rolls herself back over onto her back, next to Aiden. They both look up at the tapestry as if they are looking for the most complicated constellations.

CLEO

(sits up)

Let's do something.

AIDEN

Okay, like what?

CLEO

Hmm...

(smiles softly)

AIDEN

Oh, Cleo, shall I get the car?

CLEO

Hm, you know? That's not too shabby of an idea.

Cleo laughs and slowly gets out of bed. She makes her way towards her closet and pulls out a big hoodie and sweatpants to put on over her tank top and shorts.

AIDEN

I don't think I've ever been more ready for an adventure with you, Cleo Amelia.

CLEO

Ditto.

Cleo and Aiden climb out of her bedroom window and make their way towards Aiden's house where they got into his old, Subaru Outback.

CLEO

Music?

AIDEN

Of course. You get the aux chord, play something.

CLEO

(acting extremely surprised in a very friendly yet sarcastic manner)

Me? I get the aux chord? God, Aiden, California really did change you.

(laughs)

What are you in the mood for?

AIDEN

Anything, really.

CLEO

I guess this is a George Harrison kind of night?

AIDEN

Of course, of course. Sometimes all you need is some experimental, jazzy pop music on a Tuesday at 3:30am.

CLEO

I couldn't agree more.

The two are blasting George Harrison as loud as the tiny Subaru could play music. They are singing as loud as they could.

CLEO

Aiden! Where the hell are we going?

AIDEN

I honestly do not know, I just want to ride with you if that's okay.

CLEO

(looks down at her painted fingernails that were always chipped and smiled.)

I am so happy I met you.

AIDEN

You and me both, Cleo... You and me both. Play some Bowie now... "Heroes." It is the perfect song for this moment.

The car pulls up into a parking garage at a local shopping center. They drive all the way up to the top level where there is no roof.

AIDEN

Wanna get out?

CLEO

Yeah.

(she jumps out of the car)

Aiden pulls out a large, colorful blanket and lays it out onto the parking garage's ground.



AIDEN

Come here.

Aiden lays on his blanket and looks up at the stars.

AIDEN

This is exactly what I wanted.

Cleo lays down next to him, looking up with him.

CLEO

Like, right at this moment or in general?

AIDEN

Forever, Cleo... Forever.



# Invisible Man

Rachel Meyer

# Unrequited Love

Nikki Deneau

Tonight I was going to see her again; the sound of her beautiful voice resonated in my head as I took one last look at myself in the bathroom mirror. We were going to an open mic night at a bar in DC, and she was going to read some of her poetry. She was a brilliant writer, even though she refused to acknowledge it. She was brilliant at everything that she did. I was convinced that she was a perfect human being. Kind, talented, funny. She could always lighten the mood no matter where or what the circumstances were. My thoughts were interrupted by my phone vibrating on the bathroom counter. I opened it to find a text from my boyfriend telling me he's parked outside of my house waiting for me. I took a deep breath and ran my fingers through my messy blonde hair before heading outside where was waiting in his car.

"Finally," he said with clear annoyance in his voice even though I didn't keep him waiting that long.

"Nice to see you too, Alex," I said. He gave a little chuckle before turning his head to look at me and placed a kiss on my cheek. As we pulled out of the driveway, I looked at him and examined every feature. His bright blue eyes that I had fallen for last year were suddenly dull. His flaws which I had once loved were now just flaws. I turned the volume of the radio up as an attempt to distract myself from my thoughts. "Angeles" by Elliott Smith played and I sung along. I guess Alex didn't appreciate my off key singing, because he almost immediately changed the station. Instead of arguing, I just sat back and looked out the window and up at the stars.

"The stars are so pretty," I said softly.

"They're just stars," Alex replied. I felt my chest get heavier and I was suddenly enveloped in anxiety; I sighed and tried to focus on my breathing. Alex noticed, but didn't say anything. I wished I could've snapped myself out of it. I pulled out a pack of cigarettes, placing one between my fingers.

"That's disgusting," Alex said to me. I rolled my eyes as I rolled down the window and lit it up while holding it up to my lips.

"Keep smoking and you'll be dead by twenty," Alex said.

"That's the point," I replied before inhaling the smoke and letting the rest disappear out through the car window.

We arrived at the bar around 10:00 pm and saw Olivia standing in the parking lot with her boyfriend Nate. She had his jacket draped over her shoulders and his arm was wrapped around her waist. Her short hair was now dyed purple, which contrasted perfectly with her green eyes. I couldn't help but smile at the sight of her.

"Hey man, what's up?" she said as she stood on her tippy toes to greet Alex with a hug.

"Hey. Sorry for being late. This girl kept me waiting," Alex said as he nodded his head towards me.

"You're not late, don't worry," Olivia said before hugging me. We pulled out our fake IDs to show the security guards at the front door. We chose a booth to sit in and

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"I'm gonna go sign up, be right back." She dismissed herself. I admired how confident she looked when she walked, like she knew exactly where she was going and why.

manipulation. I couldn't help but think about my relationship with Alex and how well Olivia's words captured it. I look over at Alex who was looking at Olivia the way I wished he looked at me. Or maybe the way I wish Olivia looked at me.

"...I'm going to get the hell away, because I'm so much more than what he has to say," Olivia delivered. She took a bow as everyone claps.

"That was so good!" Alex told Olivia as she walked back to our table.

"That was amazing, babe," Nate was still clapping.

"Thanks, guys. Now, if you don't mind, I'm gonna go outside for some air," Olivia said as she picked up her jacket and put it on.

"Mind if I join?" I asked.

"Not at all," she smiled. I could almost feel Alex staring at me as I stood up and walked out through the backdoor with his best friend. As we walked through the door, a gust of cold wind hit us. I looked at Olivia as she studied the night sky, the stars reflecting in her beautiful eyes.

"They're pretty, aren't they?" I said, switching my gaze from her to the stars.

"Breathtaking," she replied with a smile as she closed her eyes. When she opened them again, she was looking at me.

"What?" I laugh.

"Nothing. You're just beautiful," she said. I looked down at my shoes and I couldn't help but smile.

"Can I ask you something?" I asked, remembering the meaning behind her poem. She nodded.

"Was your poem about Nate?" I asked her. She laughed and looked up at the sky then back at me. She shook her head no and sighed.

"It's about you... and Alex," she told me.

"What do you mean?" I was confused.

"Don't get me wrong, I love Alex. He's like a brother to me and he has been since we were kids, but I've seen the way he treats you and it's far from what you deserve." She stepped closer to me.

"And what do I deserve?" I asked, tilting my head. Olivia looked into my eyes and then down at my lips. She looked hesitant, but she leaned in and kissed me. The feeling was incredible. I could taste the cherry chapstick on her lips, and I felt something I had never felt with Alex. My heart began to beat faster and the butterflies I had felt in my stomach when I first met her had returned. I felt absolutely invincible in that moment. Nothing had mattered but her. The universe was revolving around us and nothing could possibly go wrong... until I remembered that we were both in committed relationships.

"What about Alex and Nate?"

"That's up to you," she laughs.

"Let's leave."

"Leave?" Olivia asked.

"Yeah, me and you and the open road," I suggested, grinning with a renewed hope. She gave a nod, and grabbed her keys before we cascaded off into the sunset.

# Torn

Sarah Lozier



An excerpt from  
*The Chronicles of Tartehea*  
Maria Schaupp

The cell was dark, and cold. A musty smell hung in the air. The stone walls, floor and ceiling were rough and uneven, and the crude shape of the room was the work of the many picks that had cut through the rock so long ago.

The cell was quiet now. Even the rats that had foraged blindly along the walls were silent. The spider in the corner of the room had ceased its spinning and sat motionless in the center of its web. The dust had settled to the floor and did not stir. Everything was still. This was not a peaceful silence. It was a fearful silence.

The spider felt his presence. The rats felt his presence. It hung in the air like a black curtain and seeped into the ground like poisoned water and crawled up the walls like a choke vine. In the presence, nothing would dare move. Because the prison that for so long had been vacant, was vacant no longer.

It held a prisoner.

Fearnce did not need a torch to see everything around him. The cell was nearly pitch black, yet he could see just fine. His reflective eyes with their cat-like pupils served him well. His flat, two-tipped tongue flicked out through his small fangs and tasted the air. Someone was coming.

Three someones, actually. One of them was his new enemy, who had recently broken Fearnce's nose, gave him a black eye, and a swollen bruise on the left side of his face. At the smell, the red hot desire to hurt that man who had hurt him kindled in Fearnce's chest, hot and hungry for blood.

The second someone was female, and he had smelled her before, a long time ago, in his father's labs. No doubt she had been experimented on.

The third was a different story. The smell made his claws come out of their sheaths between his fingers, and the hair on his neck stand straight up. Fearnce shivered. He was alive. He was here. It was impossible. His tongue smelled no metal, or wood yet. The leather smell of their clothes was quite distinct, but there was nothing to aid this man in walking toward Fearnce's cell. Impossible.

Fearnce waited. He could hear their footsteps on the ground now. At this distance, Fearnce could smell a small bit of steel on the female's, and the other man's person. Some tool, probably a knife, was hidden among their clothes. The enemy, who had somehow decided that punching the prince of demons would benefit him was unarmed, and Fearnce knew that if the chains that pinned him to the cell floor were lifted, the enemy's fists wouldn't even touch Fearnce this time.

The people were getting closer. Fearnce waited. He darted his tongue out again. He could smell all three of them. The female was nervous yet she felt safe, the enemy was tense, and the third was... unafraid. Unlike his company, the third was not afraid of Fearnce. He was curious, and maybe even happy, though Fearnce couldn't be sure.

The footsteps were loud and clear now. Light from a torch was casting its flickering

yellow glow on the walls of the tunnel. Ten more seconds, and the people would come into Fearnce's sight.

Nine seconds... eight seconds... seven seconds... six seconds... five seconds...

Two words were spoken. Two pairs of footsteps stopped. One pair of footsteps continued. His enemy and the female had stopped. The other was still coming.

Three seconds... two seconds... one second.

A person stood at the door of the cell, looking through the bars at Fearnce's pitiful form, outlined by the torchlight.

The man, more of a boy, since he was only eighteen, was six feet tall, exactly Fearnce's height, and appeared to be dressed simply. He wore a long, brown cloak with the hood pulled low over his eyes. The ends of long, snow white hair braided in tiny locks poked out from the hood.

This man did not judge Fearnce, or criticize him. He did not stare at Fearnce with loathing, or disgust. His gaze was fair, and his eyes saw not what could be, would be, or should be, but simply what was.

The presence of this man radiated through the air like the sun, and seeped into the ground like clear spring water, and seemed to cast light on the darkened shadows of the walls, pushing back the fear and uncertainty that lingered there.

The man took an old key out of his pocket and drove it into the lock on the door of the cell. The awful sound of metal grating on metal rang through the prison as the door was opened. The sudden noise in the fearful silence was startling. It broke apart the silence that Fearnce's presence had built, layer upon layer, and shattered it, not unlike a sword shatters glass. The rats and the spider and the dust started moving again.

Fearnce waited. Fearnce was not afraid of this man, just as this man was not afraid of him.

With the grace of a warrior, the man stepped into the cell. He held the torch in his right hand and the key in his left. He did not say anything as he walked toward Fearnce. He crouched down next to him and fluently started unlocking the shackles that bound Fearnce to the cell. The cell door was left open. Fearnce knew that if he ran, this man would not try hard to find him.

Fearnce felt the weight of the chains sliding off of him. He had not moved from the sitting position, nor had he been able to, in what he thought was two days. He could run around the corner, give a blow to the female and three blows to his enemy, and then he would be gone before they could blink. But Fearnce had nowhere to run to. He was not wanted by anyone, anywhere.

Fearnce was alone. Almost.

The man's hands moved lightly and quickly as he released Fearnce's limbs from the floor. The chains made loud clicking noises as they hit the stone.

Fearnce tensed his hands and feet. He flexed the muscles of his legs and arms. He wanted to move, wanted to run, wanted to get away, wanted to get OUT. But he had nowhere to go. Fearnce was alone. Almost.

The last shackle fell away from Fearnce. The two men stood, in unison. Fearnce reached around and pulled the hood away from the man's face.

Fearnce's eyes took in the white, neatly trimmed, chin length hair, braided into tiny cords framing the man's face, with tiny silver beads on the ends to keep them from un-

raveling. The man took in Fearnce's blond, uncut, shoulder length hair. Fearnce looked at the silver circlet with the deep blue sapphire in the middle that wrapped around the man's head. The man looked at the place where Fearnce's black crown should have rested on his head. The man's face, once flawless, was now flawed, with two symmetrical scars running the length of his symmetrical cheekbones. Fearnce looked at the man's dark brown, knowing eyes, just as the man looked at Fearnce's wild, icy blue ones.

And so it was, that Fearnce, the half-human half-demon prince, heir to the throne of hell, stood face to face with Arryith, half-human half-angel, heir to the throne of heaven, once again.



# Burning City

Feriel Friloux





Bab - e - Khyber  
Mohammad Hamza Ali



Badshahi Mosque  
Mohammad Hamza Ali



# Portrait

Josue Mendez

ARCHIVES  
L1152 10 Drum F E D C m G m A m

French horns  
piano  
G-A  
counter melody

Final section = melody - Horns / saxes  
filler - winds  
Harmony - strings / keyboard  
Break down

F Em Em<sup>+</sup> D Am E Am

G D E B E B E  
A B A E B E

F B B G A F

A F G A ↑ ↑ ↑ (Devil)

↑ triplet section

↑ sixteenth

↑ here or here?

↑ Intro / Bird / Up / Main / Theme / Impacts

↑ short end / theme / FAC / sixteenth

↑ all in / end on am or cadenza

Carda no. 7 Have I won? (The next cadenza is possible)

NO. 7  
Final of Gsus2?  
Synth

# Overture for 8-bit Suite

Jason Miller

# Graduation

Lucas Perez

Seven

June 2017

At my high school, everybody wants to leave  
Who took time away from me, they're a thief  
Two months before I'm gone, I'm in disbelief  
But I guess there is a lot of things I achieved  
Thinking about my regrets, it'll be hard to move on  
Bring up girls and soccer, they're soon to be gone  
The list can go on, something I'll tell my grandson  
But in five weeks, my high school years will be done

All of my classmates want to leave  
But I do not feel like I'm ready  
Are we prepared for what's to come?  
Want to stay longer, keep steady

Everything that occurred, wish I could have done a lil' differently  
Crazy how soon, it'll be graduation instead of some assembly  
I'm not the type to complain, so please excuse this negativity  
No idea what I want to be in life, seems my brain is in captivity  
It's feeling like yesterday was my very first day of high school  
I now remember my mother telling me about the "Golden Rule"  
That time is the only thing we cannot control, call me a big fool  
I was probably busy with unimportant stuff thinking I was cool

All of my classmates want to leave  
But I don't feel like I'm ready  
Are we prepared for what's to come?  
Want stay a little longer, keep steady

What people need to realize, is that this is graduation  
Later in life, there'll be no such thing as procrastination  
Rich spoiled kids already have cars all over the nation  
But in five years they might just be at the metro station  
Important thing I realized, is to keep your circle small  
Cause the ones telling you "Aye, let's go to the mall"  
Are saying behind your back that you're no good at all  
When's the last time I had a real friend? I don't recall



Newt Scamander's Room  
Sanjana Kottapalli



Whitecaps  
Teresa Stabler

**FICTION EDITION**



## Barnyard Bride

Naaman Alajaji



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JASON MILLER  
NAAMAN ALAJAJI  
JOELLA HUYNH