

# IMPRESSIONS

LASALLE-PERU TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL



MEDIA SKINNY

Jay McConnell

# 2025-2026

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ART



**all at once**

**Jay McConnell**

Impressions is the LaSalle-Peru Township High School literary and arts magazine. All work included was submitted by students.

Editorial Advisor  
Mrs. Farringer

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# Sonnet

A girl is fighting for her memories  
She tries to run far, but she cannot hide  
Memories but not enough centuries  
Her love for him disappeared when she died

Adeline LaRue, what a name to have  
Never pray to the gods when the sun sets  
He tries to take her soul, but she just laughs  
Empty words with promises of death threats

The lost book store, those three words change her life  
A boy and a girl, a journal of days  
Centuries, those three words stab like a knife  
Gods come to take her away, she betrays

A boy in time without her love  
She watches him and floats from high above

Jay McConnell



Untitled  
Mia Dille



Agaric Aether  
Emma Spayer

# My Color

What color am I?  
When you shine a brilliant blue,  
I too reflect a similar hue.  
But when another shines a color anew,  
my color is no longer the same as I once knew.

So tell me what color I am,  
when translucent is not a color you can see.  
It is not anyone's favorite color, so let me be  
a color that you do love- don't you agree?  
No one would love me if I were a color that was me.

Gwen Gress



Let Them Drink Coke

KJ Gallik

## Take Me As I Am

Take me as I am.

Take when I'm annoying

Take me when I'm annoying.

Take when you see my natural hair.

Take me when see me without make up,

take me when you see me off the wake up

Take me when I cry and take me when I'm sad.

And take me on the days where my depression gets real bad.

Take me for all I am,

And take me for who I want to be.

Because if you're not taking all then,

You're only taking part of me.

Imani Robinson

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## Converse

Like my oldened tearing shoes,  
The coffee pot on its last brew,  
Yesterday's forgotten news,  
My fathers childhood screws,  
Worn vinyls of blues,  
Or my slow healing bruise.

To grow is to change.

From old to new.

Importance is a range.

To put some things back in the rearview.

Different schools,

Changing views,

Altering preferences,

Replacing old portraits,

Growing into a new person,

Reorganizing items from my adolescence.

Since its change doesnt mean its bad,

Whether it makes you sad, mad, or even glad.

Those feelings are normally just fads.

Soon everyone realizes they are just fine.

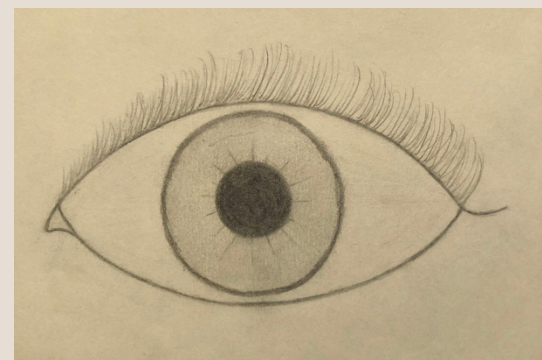
Even when they whine.

If you'd ask them to undo their changes,

They would decline.

Because fate runs a very fine line.

JoAn Murphy



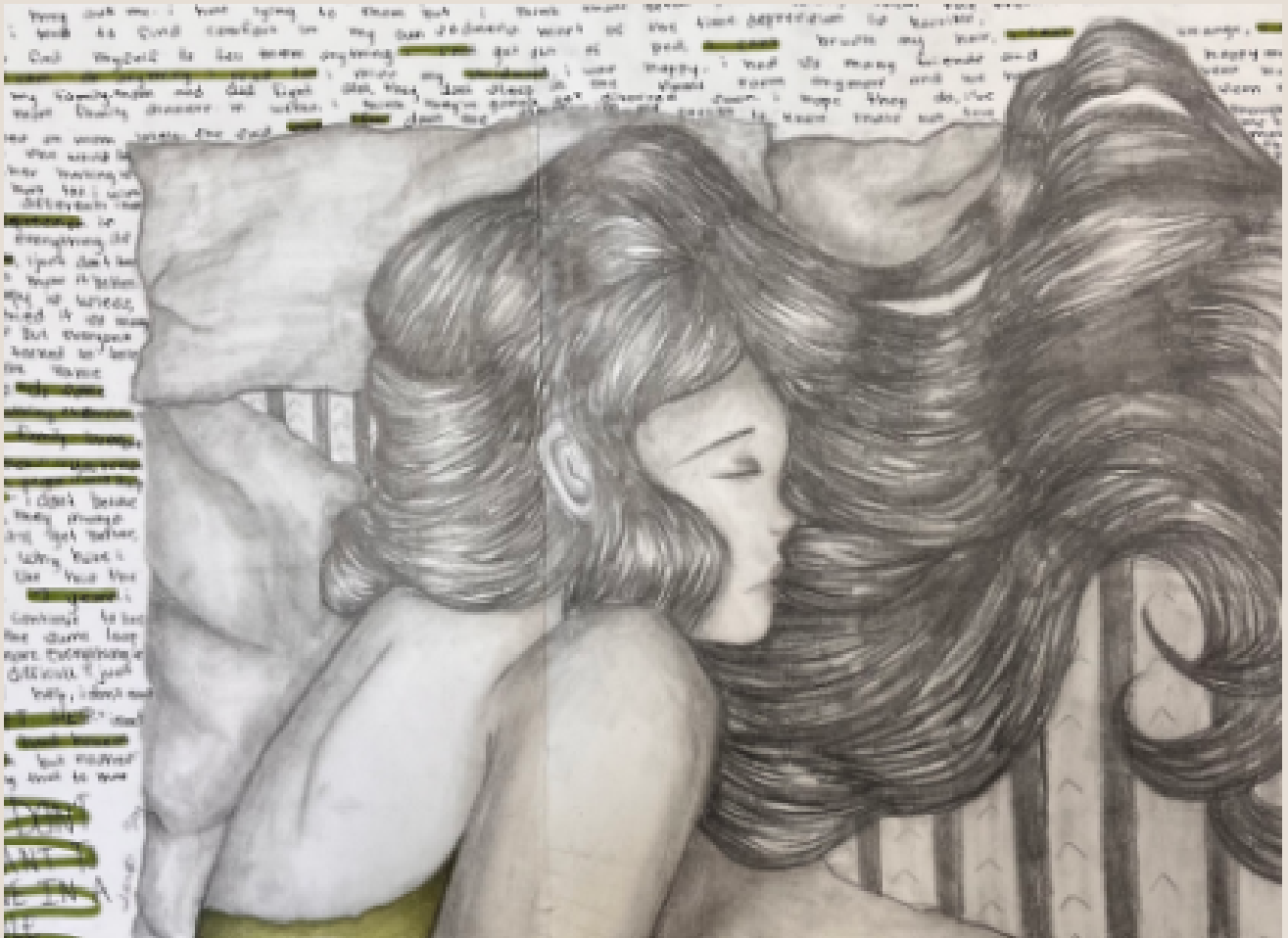
Untitled

Emma Spayer

# Rehearsal for the apology I'll never get

I find myself talking to myself.  
I find myself looking for the perfect response.  
Practice after practice, line after line,  
Adding news sentences each time.  
I dream about this moment.  
I ask myself what would my body language be?  
And my facial expressions, what about my delivery?  
Hours go past, then days, then months, even years.  
All this time I've spent rehearsing for the apology I'll never get.

Imani Robinson



seasonal depression

Jay McConnell

# New Chapter

To shut the final chapter of your book, to only realize there's more.  
There you spot volume two;  
a gift or a tragedy, if only you knew.  
To close the door of innocence- the cracked and faded door.

It did not come easy, but you turned the page with no one else to blame.  
You did not recognize the characters in the book,  
or the actions the main character took.  
It made you doubt that it was part of the same book, but the name on the cover was all the same.

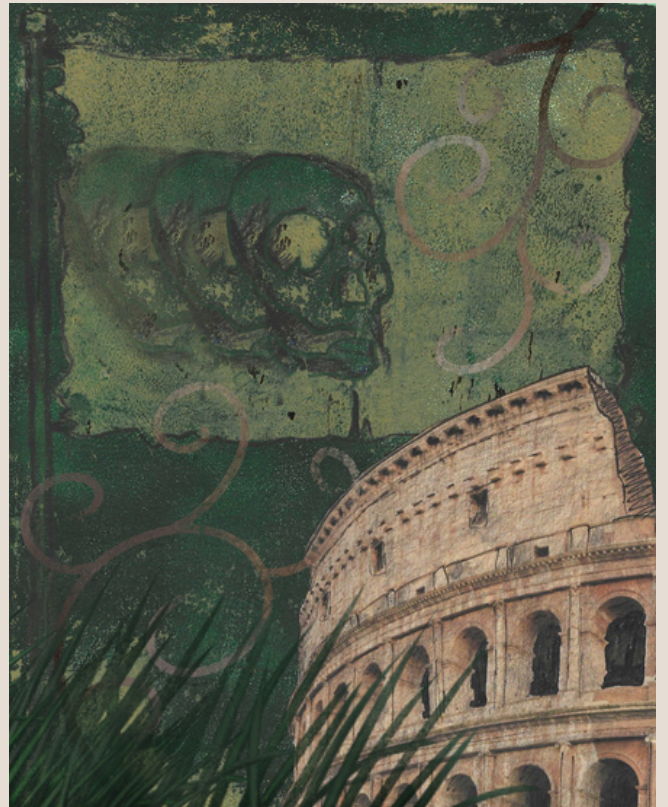
The name was yours, and yours alone.  
"How could this be mine?" was but a question for you.  
You would never let the story become so skew.  
Did you have no control over the pen that forged what was shown?

Frustrated, you tossed the book into the fire, discarding the words that were sown.  
You would never let yourself become someone so callous.  
The story was foreshadowing an ending only full of malice.  
You would defy fate, even your own.

Watching the paper crumble to ash, you declared a new kind of resolution,  
one that would heed this warning.  
You would turn your life around and ensure an ending not full of mourning.  
It was time to write your own solution.

Gwen Gress

The Mark of Man  
KJ Gallik





Untitled  
Brooke Maynard

## I Thought We Were Friends

I thought we were friends when we met in May  
I thought we were friends when we first played a game  
I thought we were friends when we walked through your doorway

I thought we were friends when I took the blame  
I thought we were friends when I unlocked the gateway  
I thought we were friends when I got close to the flame

I thought we were friends when you skipped my birthday  
I thought we were friends when you took aim  
I thought we were friends when you left that day

Anonymous

# Look Like Me

Hello!  
Have you seen me?  
I look like me, I sound like me,  
I even talk like me.  
But I do not feel like me.  
We're the same height, we have the same sea glass green eyes,  
And the same pin straight black hair.  
We love the same music, and draw the same things,  
We even love the same 90's movies!  
However,  
I still do not feel like me.  
I put on that old hoodie,  
I go back to that same place,  
And hang up old projects.  
For a second,  
I feel like me.  
But it does not work.  
I reconnect with old friends, I listen to the same old songs,  
But I still do not feel like me.  
I get home, I walk through the same door,  
I place my bag down in the same place,  
I throw my dirty converse in the corner of my room,  
Still do not feel like me,  
I walk to the kitchen,  
Still do not feel like me.  
I pull out my phone and look at the reflection,  
I do not recognize the girl staring back at me.  
Even tho, she is me.  
Maybe you took me with you,  
Still do not feel like me,  
Maybe all the effort was for nothing,  
Still do not feel like me,  
Are those grades really worth it?  
Still do not feel like me.  
I still can't help but think,  
I can't help but question,  
Have you seen me?

Jay McConnell



Untitled

Addyson Ciesielski



beauty in death

Jay McConnell

## Him.

He sits in his chair  
Eyes looking nowhere  
His ginger hair falls to his eyes  
Acting for a disguise

I stand here, there, nowhere  
My shoulders slumped and hair going everywhere  
My fingers picking and pinching the seat.  
Waiting for him to look at me.

His eyes meet mine, and when he stares.  
My mind goes everywhere.

Does he see a girl who actively wanders, waiting for someone to listen to her ponder  
Does he see the rolls and bumps that are covered by her clothes, leaving nothing for the  
eyes to wonder

Does he see the hues flush to her cheeks, the moment he starts to speak  
Does he hear the shake of her voice, leaving her no choice but to dim the noise.

His gaze leaves mine, just as quickly as it came, and moves to a new name.

As he gazes at her, I feel everything.  
I feel the lumps and bumps and rolls of my awkward body.  
I feel my shoulders hunch and my shirt bunch.  
I feel the warmth from my cheeks and the sting in my throat.

As he looks at the opposite girl in wonder, I ponder.  
What does he see when he wonders?

Does he see the gentle curl of her onyx hair  
Does he see the smoothness in her tan skin  
Does he hear her gentle voice ring out in the room for all to hear, the shake in it unclear.

Does he ever think about the lumpy girl as he sits and wonders, or does she fade into the  
background, never left a ponder.

Kara Ciesielski



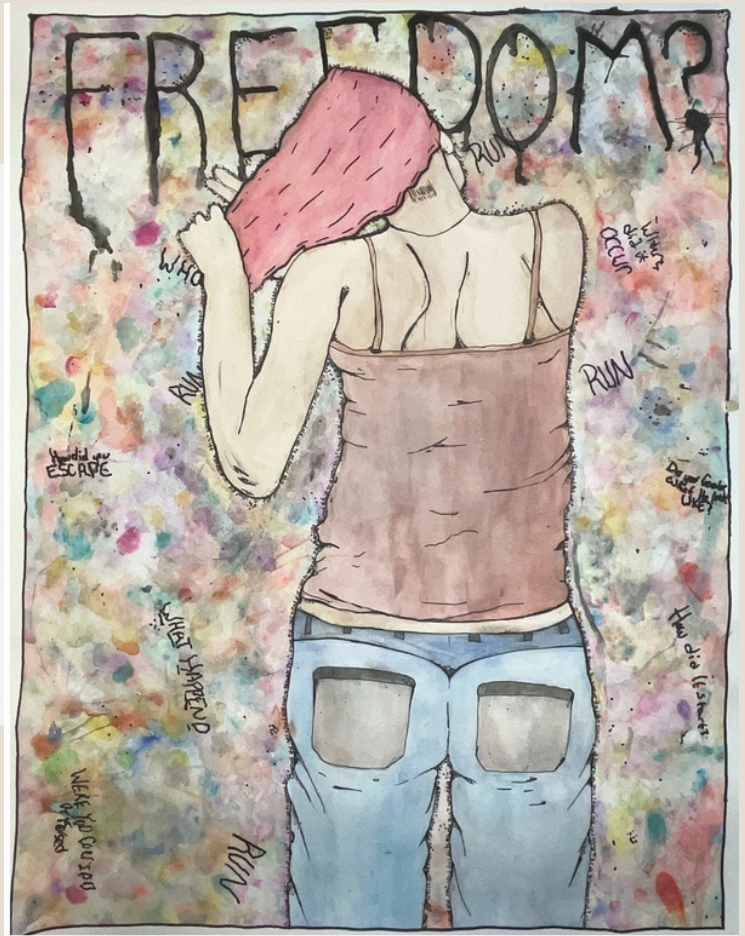
Old Wizard

KJ Gallik

## The Silent Trade

### Izzy Fonger

The piece is titled "The Silent Trade" as this reflects the unseen exchanges that happen all around those strips away pieces of identity and trust. Through layered color and fragmented text, showing the tension between loss and the longing for freedom, capturing a quiet fight to reclaim oneself.



## to be loved

to be loved -

to be loved,

is to be known.

not in the way they know how to spell your name,

what your favorite color is,

what season you enjoy the most,

or your favorite holiday.

to be loved,

is to be known.

in the way they know you.

how you are when you get mad,

what you do when you get nervous,

and can't stop bouncing your leg or messing with your necklace,

how to brighten your day with one conversation,

to see things that remind you of them,

being able to cuddle up together without any awkward moments or "is this okay?" ,

because you already know it's more than okay.

to know what your future plans are,

and to support you through them.

to be loved, is to be known.

and you know me.

Jay McConnell

# Burnt and Wilt

by Zephyr Crow

Wynn looked out into the inky darkness. There were no stars or moon to bring any form of light other than the flashlights everyone held. Her family was there, watching with her. They knew what should be there, a forest with a large lake and a small island in the center, but they stopped being able to see it ever since the sun stopped rising three weeks ago. What should have been the hottest summer on record in Nevada turned into a bitter-cold winter. As Wynn stepped forward, she could feel the slickness of the frozen lake. When she pointed the flashlight down, all she could see was the murky darkness and the shimmer of the ice.

Her father, Patrick, grabbed her shoulder, giving her a look as he kept her steady. They all knew that they were done for. Their only savior was the stolen circuits on the small island. The creatures of the darkness were everywhere; the only signs of them were the red glow of their eyes and their incessant cries.

“We could try to find Lai,” Dante, Wynn’s younger half-brother, suggested. Lai was one of the creatures of the darkness, the only one to retain its humanity despite being corrupted by the darkness. Lai had disappeared when the world went dark. The frigid winds picked up, blowing the pitch-snow against their feet.

“There’s not enough time,” the twins, Wynn’s youngest step-siblings, said in near-unison. Clem held a device in his hand, it looked like a pocket watch with a chain, but it was useless without the circuits. Cal was gazing at the ice, her eyes searching for some kind of opportunity or object to help them.

Wynn glanced between her siblings, father, and stepfather, Evan. She could see the dread on all their faces. None of them would be able to run fast enough across the ice to get the circuits before the monsters got them. Patrick was a quick runner, but he wouldn’t be able to stay upright on the ice. Clem wasn’t a sporty person, preferring to work on computers and machines. Cal was athletic, but was a fighter rather than a runner, going for boxing and karate. Evan wasn’t quick either, his bulkier muscles built from weightlifting were for strength, not for speed. Dante couldn’t run anymore due to injuries caused by the rot, only recently regaining the ability to walk on his own.

That left Wynn. She looked back at the ice, a taunting reminder that they were left for dead. Her hands clenched to fists, anger building up in her. The world and whatever god existed had forsaken them, given up on them as the hope in them died each day. The circuits and Clem’s device were their last chance to leave this universe and find a new one in the multi-verse.

Patrick started to whisper a prayer, pleading for some kind of peace for his family, for all of them. In her mind, Wynn told any higher power that they were disgusting for letting this even happen. Dante, Cal, Clem, and Evan were all murmuring, trying to find some kind of way to get to the island. Wynn shifted her feet, looking down at her shoes, an idea forming in her head. The blades at the bottom, meant to help traverse the slick snow and ice while walking, could be used to skate. It was a death wish, but the thought of how her wife was still in the city, helping the injured and sick, risking her own life, made her take the leap.

Evan and Patrick cried out as Wynn grabbed the device from Clem and darted forward, the blades gliding across the ice. She slipped the device in her pocket. She pushed herself forward with each swift movement, her lean muscles strengthening each movement, quickly picking up speed. Her short teal dress fluttered in the breeze, her pockets full of the throwing knives she'd been using to keep the creatures away. As she sped on, she kept her head down, looking at the ice. The shyyes, the quickest of the creatures, only attacked if looked at or touched.

The echoing sound of blood-curdling screams alerted Wynn of a brinn. The sound came from the right of her, loud enough to assume that it was only maybe twenty or thirty feet away. She kept going, gaining as much speed as she could. The brinn's calls made her skin crawl, sounding like the screams of the friends she'd lost to this awful, corrupting rot that had consumed their world and would soon destroy it according to Lai.

The ice cracked behind Wynn, caused by the brinn bounding forward. The creature was humanoid, just like the rest, although brinns normally ran on all fours. About a thousand feet away was the island, where the circuits rested, protected by more of the monsters. The howl of the wind harmonized with the screeches of the brinn to create a cacophony of noise; Wynn felt bad for Dante; all the noise was most likely overloading his senses.

A thousand feet turned to five hundred. The brinn was catching up, nearly grabbing Wynn a few times. She started zig-zagging, the brinn sliding around uncoordinated as a result. She kept going, getting closer, when the brinn narrowly touched her. She stumbled, catching herself as she snatched a knife from her pocket and sent it directly into the brinn's eye.

The brinn yowled, the milky white blood spilling onto the black ice. Its cries sounded through the woods, gaining the attention of more of the monsters. Wynn groaned in frustration as three other brinns and a creature she didn't recognize.

It was the tallest by far. Wynn wasn't a tall woman, being the shortest of her family and most people she knew. Even then, the creature had to be at least ten times her height. She shined the flashlight at it, seeing how its spindly body slowly moved forward. Its legs broke through the ice with each step, diving knee-deep into the frigid waters. It was like one of the creatures that Lai had described, a xell. They used their superior sight and higher standing to control the others, giving them directions in gurgles and grunts.

The new brinns chased after Wynn. Their movements were more precise and intelligent; the xell was already working on getting her. It watched her patterns, seeing how she moved, how she fought, how she functioned. Erraticism would be her own guide.

Wynn turned directions, to the right and back to land. The brinns were on her tail, the skin of their faces ripped open to show the dark abyss inside, outlined by blood-red fangs that were sharper than the ones of a shark. Their gaping maws would snap shut, skin reforming before being torn open again.

She could have sworn she felt one of the brinns get a mouthful of her red hair, yanking on one of her pigtails. The creature stopped and started gagging, spitting out the hairs in disgust as the other two continued after her. Every moment brought the land and the brinns closer. Wynn dashed forward; the screams of the brinns rattled her eardrums.

Just as she was just about to reach land, the closest brinn lunged for her. She ducked, swiftly turning to skate parallel to the land. The sudden change caused the brinn to slam into the trees on the bank, its soft skull smashing against the wood. As she spun from the quick turn, she pulled another knife from her pocket and sent it at the second brinn, the blade sticking into its throat. Its yelps were nothing more than pitiful gurgles as it drowned in its own blood.

The final brinn, ordered by the xell, continued its chase despite the hair still in its mouth. Wynn changed her directory towards the xell, using the flashlight to see its thin body. It reached down, its bony hands attempting to grab her. She would jump and glide out of the way, getting closer with each abrupt movement.

Wynn slipped another knife from her pocket as she leaped toward the beast's spindly leg. She plunged the steel into its flesh, ripping to the side as blood and soft bone tore away. The monster, unable to support itself, fell forward. Wynn skated between the xell's legs as it collapsed onto the brinn. The ice smashed from the xell's weight and both creatures fell into the chilled water.

Wynn was left panting, sliding on the ice. She collected herself for a moment while staring out into the darkness. She whispered a soft wish for them to rest peacefully. They were once human, after all. They were like her before the rot infected them and corrupted their minds and bodies. She closed her eyes, taking a deep breath before skating back toward the island. They would keep coming no matter what, so she had to focus on getting the circuits.

Gliding across was almost peaceful for Wynn. The wind had died down, gracefully blowing through her long hair. It was like the universe had calmed like her as if it understood her peace in that moment.

She soon reached the island, the blades of her shoes sticking into the snow with each step. The soft clicks and chirps instantly alerted her to the fact that there were shyys on the island. Wynn closed her eyes, slowly creeping forward while shyys infested the land. Every movement was stiff without being jerky. The further she went, the louder the sounds got. As she stepped, she felt something hit the toe of her shoe.

Wynn barely opened her eyes, mere millimeters, to see the circuit in the snow. Her eyes widened in shock and relief, the feeling of success washing over her for the first time in what felt like an eternity. She crouched down, scooping the circuits into her hands before taking the device out of her pocket.

The circuits fit perfectly inside, with no gaps of air inside as Wynn closed it up. On the front of the device, the clock's hands started spinning rapidly before abruptly stopping at 6:37, a small light at the bottom blinking pm. 6:37 pm. Wynn had stopped keeping track of time within a couple of days of the sun disappearing. It was strange yet familiar to know the time again.

Wynn turned around, her face blanching, as she saw glowing green eyes staring directly at her. The shyye's clicks turned to something more reminiscing of a siren. Every inch of her body felt solid as she stared at the shyye.

The siren sound leached to the rest of them, the hellish noise louder than anything she'd ever heard. One of the shyyes, which she saw in her peripheral vision, suddenly darted for her. She flinched, closing her eyes and raising her arms in front of her. Her hands clenched, and she accidentally pressed a button on the top of the device as everything disappeared in a flash of light.

## Zephyr Crow



Cinquain  
Gwen Gress

# Luck

The gods ruled over the mortal realm, but often, they would have disputes between themselves- similarly to humans. The gods solved such matters through violence, trickery, or acts of bravery and honor. However, Tyche avoided any such clashing, despite being a goddess herself. She knew she was outclassed when it came to all three of those attributes. So instead, she kept to herself and played in the nearby meadows. The only creatures she did converse with were the local nymphs, who she considered to be much more pleasant to have as company than the other gods and goddesses. She grew to love the nymphs, and the nymphs grew to love her too. The nymphs loved her elegantly flowing hair of gold, and the soothing scent of fresh sea salt she always possessed; which still smelt nostalgic- like freshly cut meadows. However, they loved her tenacity most of all.



Floral  
Gwen Gress

On one particular day, one of the nymphs had come back from harvesting fruit, but not with the usual tune she always hummed.

“Tyche! Tyche! You wouldn’t believe it! A man came to help me out of a ditch. I thought that I was a goner, but he came to my aid. He even gave me the battered up robe he wore- right off his back.”

Tyche was glad her friend was safe. In fact, she was very much relieved. It could have turned out much worse for the nymph, so she sought to do the man's good deed justice. She went out to find the man, and after some searching, she found him working near the forest. He was tending to a small field of crops that resided a few feet from his cabin; which seemed to be held together by random chunks of food, just begging to be blown down. The man's movements were staggered, and his expression sour. He had a family- a wife and three kids. All of whom were trying to help the man the best they could, even if one of the little girls could barely pull out the weeds that infested the garden.

Tyche immediately knew what she could do to help repay the man. By the next day, the man and his family had gone out to tend to their farm once more, but this time they found it much larger and healthier than before. The crops were already fully grown and ready to be harvested. And not only that, but a portion of the forest had been cleared out to make room for another cabin, one that was in much better shape than the one they currently lived in. The family could not have been more overjoyed by this revelation.

They spent the next few hours moving their belongings and harvesting the plentiful food. They were thrilled that the food was fresh and juicy, but as they continued to harvest the crops, it started to wither and turn mushy and grey. The yield was dying.

This was not Tyche's doing, but it was in fact another god that spoiled their food. The god's name was Nemesis, a goddess of divine retribution. Tyche was enraged by Nemesis' actions, so she decided to confront the other goddess at her temple and make it right.

"What have you done Nemesis, do you have no heart?"

The goddess waved her hand dismissively, "I have no idea what you are talking about. All I did was restore the balance of the way it should be, so get out of my sight."

"Nonsense! You deprived that poor man and his family of shelter and food."

"Poor man? That poor man ran away from his village. His village did not have enough farmers to sustain their population, so many suffered. Why should he be so fortunate?"

"He did nothing wrong, people are allowed to be fortunate."

Even with much back and forth, Nemesis would not budge, so Tyche decided to propose a proposition.

"How about we roll this; it is a six sided cube that contains its own set amount of dots on each side."

"What is that?"

"A die. You can roll it five times, and if it does not land on one five in a row, the man shall be punished and you may take my land- the meadows."

"Is this some kind of trick?"

"Nonsense, how could I possibly manipulate this die? You can feel it and roll it, and I will not touch it."

"Do you really wish to face such terrible odds?"

"Fate will determine who is right. All I ask is that you leave the man alone if I win."

"Fine, we will see."

Ultimately, Nemesis took the die, and rolled it as instructed. It landed on one, and then it landed on one again- again and again it did just that. Until eventually, it landed on the same side five times in a row. Enraged, Nemesis threw the die to the ground. It scattered away against the stone floor sharply, as the room fell into silence.

"How could this be?" Nemesis cried.

Tyche sighed in relief, "I suppose I just got lucky."

"Lucky? Impossible. I know you did something. However, I will stick to my word, but do not think you will get away with something like this again."

With that, Nemesis let Tyche go and promised to leave the man alone. Ironically, Tyche did not believe that the man's actions were right, but she did believe in repaying the man's deed to her friend. Hence, she decided to give everyone she could a chance; she did not judge who she bestowed her luck to. Tyche believed everyone deserved some luck, because only the people who put themselves in the position to properly make use of it will get something out of it. No fool would expect to win the lottery if they never bought a ticket.

## Anonymous



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