

**"Thunderous waves and nobody is to be my guarantee." -Nevaeh Mercado**



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## **Ink, A Literary Arts Magazine**

**Issue 22, Fall 2023**

**Woodland Community College**



**Ink**

*A Literary Arts Magazine*

**Issue 22**

*Woodland Community College  
Fall 2023*

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**Front Cover Art:** “Seeking Solitude” by LAWD

**Back Cover Art:** “Battle with the Hands of Time” by LAWD

**Cover Poetry:** “Okay, Here We Go” by Nevaeh Mercado

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### **Submissions**

If you are a current student at Woodland Community College, Colusa County Campus, or Lake County Campus and would like to contribute to future issues, please see [wcc.yccd.edu/ink](http://wcc.yccd.edu/ink) for submission guidelines and deadlines.

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*Chasing Storms by Julia Lindsay*

**Unnoticed**  
Rain Ibarra-Pina

You are 22 but are stuck at 12  
Needing guidance  
Masking to survive a neurotypical society  
Maybe it's the undiagnosed autism  
How do you explain  
The lack of focus is from lack of diagnosis  
The lack of diagnosis is from lack of funds  
Eye contact is like fire in your eyes  
Too many sounds, like the walls are closing in  
Small talk, a maze you'll never navigate successfully  
Can't we skip to the part where we info dump?  
Why aren't there more resources?  
The undiagnosed go unnoticed  
Blending in with the rest  
Following neurotypical guidelines  
What else can you do?  
The rules are the rules in society  
And it's okay to bend them everyone does  
Until it isn't  
Landing you in trouble for what you will never understand But  
you're supposed to  
no diagnosis means no proof  
That's just how society works  
And after all you're 22 not 12

## Okay Here We Go

Nevaeh Mercado

Okay here we go,  
I know you don't want to hear me vent,  
But I'm starting to resent  
This thing called Poetry.  
I'm not a creative writer,  
I don't feel like a writer at all.  
What makes a writer a writer?  
It's certainly not my typewriter,  
Definitely, not the fact I'm an overnighter,  
So should I be a bullfighter?  
Do I not deserve the right to an English degree?  
Oh how my mind feels like the Black Sea,  
Thunderous waves and nobody is to be my guarantee.  
It's alright, I'll just sit here and sip my black tea  
In hopes someone would hear my plea,  
My plea that is so much bitter than my iced tea,  
It's all good I agree, I'm not trying to write a book  
Or simply the fact my writing makes me unhook.  
I'll never be creative to design that comic book,  
Just as long as I don't take a look at my yearbook.  
A pity hiding within plain sight of my looks.  
The looks of who is a writing crook.  
But life will continue since we humans have nothing better than to  
be shook.  
At everything that seems to give looks.  
Here we go again

## **It's Not That Hard, Right?**

Marcus Woodward

It shouldn't be hard to write a musical poem, this shouldn't take too long.

This is a piece of cake, it's like writing the lyrics to a song.

But what can I write about? I've got nothing to say.

I've been sitting here thinking practically almost all day.

Trying to stir something up, finding anything to write about,

Because at this point I'm starting to feel a little bit of doubt.

I gotta come up with something, whatever comes to mind.

Because right now, I'm not seeing anything to find.

I hope that I can think of an idea soon,

I hope that I can think of an idea at least by noon.

Maybe I could write a poem about writing a poem,

No, that's a stupid idea, and not very clever.

I have to write about something in my poem,

I have to write it soon, not whenever.

I just had an idea, an idea, an idea!

I'll just write about the spider I saw the other night,

The one that surely gave me quite a fright.

I'll add a bit of humor, give it a bit of comedic effect.

Yes, this idea for a poem is perfect!

## **Memories of Graduation**

Marcus Woodward

My high school graduation,

My new step towards the unknown,

After years of public education,

I finally felt that I was on my own.

The walk to the stage, diploma in hand.

The confetti and such fluttering the air.



The instruments of the school band.  
The itchy caps that we had to wear.  
I remember the tears and hugs,  
a plethora of final goodbyes.

Everything felt so surreal,  
  
it almost made me want to cry.

Along with my positive recollection,  
I still remember it fondly,  
A great time for social connection,

How far I've come now is beyond me. I often  
remind myself of this new path crossed, as my  
diploma hangs high above my wall. For when I  
begin to feel unhappy or lost, this is a special  
memory to recall.

My college life is so different than high school,  
even if right next to my previous campus.  
I always compare the major differences,  
but now I have my own life compass.  
Where in high school I knew people,  
a whole bunch of friends and peers.  
But in college, I know little to nobody.  
That's how it's going to be for my college years.  
Although I will eventually meet new people,  
I'll never forget my friends of the past.  
While my college year has been great so far,  
like my high school graduation, not all things last.

## **The Perfect Summer**

Mahum Bashir

Time doesn't matter when I'm with them,  
Everything seems to slow down and I remember every moment.  
I remember watching as the kids run around,  
I remember as the dogs roam freely through the backyard.  
The nice summer breeze making its way  
The way the sunlight is bright but setting at the same time,  
The smell of the barbecue in the air.  
The sound of mix laughter filling the air with music in the  
background,  
Not a worry about tomorrow.  
I enjoy the moment, remember the feeling.  
Just watching everyone have a good time,  
Knowing that soon everything will change because some are  
leaving.  
Some are starting school not near,  
Some have decided it's time for a change,  
It's still fun with those who are left but not the same as it was.

## **The Best Moments**

Mahum Bashir

I like to spend time with friends  
Hoping that it never ends.  
We like to try all the new trends  
That's what makes us best friends,  
The times that we laugh and cry,  
Knowing that the other doesn't lie.  
The time that I needed a ride  
She dropped her plans and came to my side,  
I know that I can say with pride  
That our friendship is like a never ending tide.  
Our friendship means a lot to me  
That only a few can see.

## **Counting Down the Years**

Mahum Bashir

Not once has your presence left my mind  
I count the years that go by,  
I know your kind is rare to find  
I am always left with a sigh.  
Our memories always stay so sweet,  
The times we would laugh

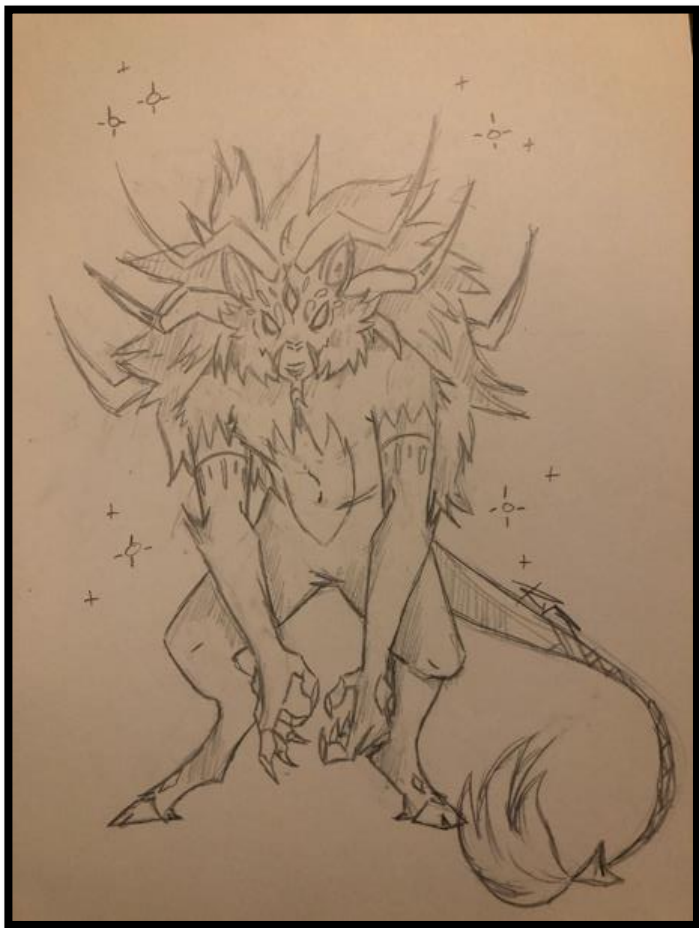
I have waited for the day we would again meet  
Oh, how I wished our memories were photographed.  
I miss the nights we would just chatter,  
I miss the constant movie nights  
Knowing that time didn't matter,  
Knowing that you were with me and everything was bright.  
Because I know that love is what matters  
Because I know our love won't shatter

## **Frozen**

Julia Lindsay

What's happened to my lifelong frame of mind  
Touching fire so long as I was never blind?  
My sight the most important thing to me  
But now, all that I want is just to be  
Frozen  
Frozen  
Frozen with you standing next to me.

I used to push the seconds, move along  
Sitting still would always feel so wrong  
Until the day you took my hand in yours  
My restless days seem way behind the doors  
Frozen  
Frozen  
Frozen till you tell me I am yours.



*Cryptid by Adriana Orozco*

**She's My Love**  
Nevaeh Mercado

I laid my head against his chest and stared,  
At the speckled lights within the stark night sky.  
This special moment between us is shared  
Till I look and see my stark lover cry.

I held his hand and asked him for his mind,

As he sobbed on, his fingers twined with mine.  
Those dark eyes of his seem to look so kind.  
I asked him, but all he could was decline  
His weeps seemed to subside and he held me  
I left him to be with his ink demons.  
But we slept soundly under the ash tree.  
Let the world around us call us heathens.

For the love and sins we share together.  
And this season of love is our weather.

### **Butterflies Don't Date Caterpillars** LAWD

Looking for a place that I've never been  
- where have I been all this time  
- cocooned ?  
- it's time to spread my wings - it's time to fly  
- it's time to stop spreading myself thin  
- No more living Lies

"The truth shall set you free"

We are the truth - but we can't handle the truth  
We can't handle our true selves  
Always giving ourselves Hell  
Instead of having one Hell of a Time  
We give ourselves such a Hard Time  
We make things, more difficult - than they are

Looking for a place that I can fit in  
- it's time to spread my wings - it's time to fly  
- it's time to stop spreading myself thin  
- the goldfish has outgrown the fish bowl  
- the snake must shed its skin  
- I don't fit in anymore - like the butterfly  
- I shall die - if continue to crawl  
- Like the butterfly - I must fly  
- If I want to Live More

**Stone**  
Julia Lindsay

I sat at the window watching the world  
Wondering who I could be  
In a small chair where my body was curled  
I knew there was more that I could see  
Past the cul de sac and our neighbor's apple tree.

And so I searched in the sands of the desert for gold  
And I swam the oceans to find the unknown  
But the further I got, the more my blood ran cold  
I had never felt so alone  
Till you reached for me and turned my fears to stone.

As I sought for treasures through the trees  
A thought came into my mind  
The more I longed for an adventurous breeze  
Emptiness was all I would find  
I watched all my ambitions unwind.

And so I searched in the sands of the desert for gold  
And I swam the oceans to find the unknown  
But the further I got, the more my blood ran cold  
I had never felt so alone  
Till you reached for me and turned my fears to stone.

There were mountains I had to climb  
Just to see if I'd ever reach the top  
To hold the world in my hand at my prime  
Once I started, I really couldn't stop

Had to dive into the darkest caves  
As I was dying inside, though silently  
I was terrified and drowning in the waves  
Until you came to find me

It's because of you I'm no longer lost at sea.

For while I searched in the sands of the desert for gold  
I didn't realize I was turning into stone  
Until you saved my soul and removed my blindfold  
Till then, I had never felt so alone  
That's when you took me in and showed me I was known.

### **What Next**

Triston Miller

I was born  
To morning's light, to a world unshown.  
Learning, toiling, till strength was torn,  
Life's fabric woven as my own  
tapestry got sewn.

I grew old  
Dark like dusk, stories untold.  
Withered, departed, lost in a threshold,  
A memory's echo in the silence, cold.

What next?  
Beyond the light, past the Reaper's gate?  
Do we start anew, or does the void obliterate?  
Or in death, do we find those  
from whom fate did separate?

What fate awaits when life's pawn is played,  
and the curtain of existence must then fade?  
The unanswered mystery lingers on,  
What lies ahead when our time is gone

**I Think**  
Flora Ibarra

I think of your patient lessons when I apply cosmetics  
The link between them & you inescapable  
That turn of phrase still falls so easily from my lips,  
the one you thought so funny  
There's no out running the fond memories,  
kind and cruel spirits of you  
Afternoons spent laughing till we couldn't breathe, stomachs  
aching from more than lack of food  
Crying in your car, some stories so sad & life so hard  
Your name is in the crash of the ocean  
And the scar on my heart that your abrupt departure left  
I am still grateful to have had you at all  
How is life now?  
Have you escaped those demons we ran from together?  
A journey made easier by companionship  
We were so lost but we had each other, for a time  
The memory of you is in a dance,  
a laugh,  
a swing of too long hair.  
My friend where does the memory of me hide  
Or have I been forgotten?  
Do you still use that turn of phrase?  
I love you still with this scar on my heart  
And I wish you well with all that remains of it.  
A life well lived without my hand in yours.  
I think of you.



## **The Strange Martian Men**

Marcus Woodward

Gaze upon the night, astonishedly.  
Wondering about the worlds  
beyond me. The distant stars shine  
ever so brightly. Are there other  
forms of life that see me?

Are there strange, Martian men, passing the  
stars? Perhaps some inhabit our local moon.  
Moving around in their strange,  
flying cars? Maybe a stop in their  
daily commune?

Why haven't they given us a visit?  
Are they scared of us like we are of  
them? Perhaps to humans they are  
bigoted,  
We perhaps are a species they condemn.

Maybe these Martians don't even  
exist.  
If they are, I believe we could  
coexist.



*Weapons of Love by Corrie Cole*



*Running Away from the Hands of Time by LAWD*



*Overworked and Underappreciated by LAWD*



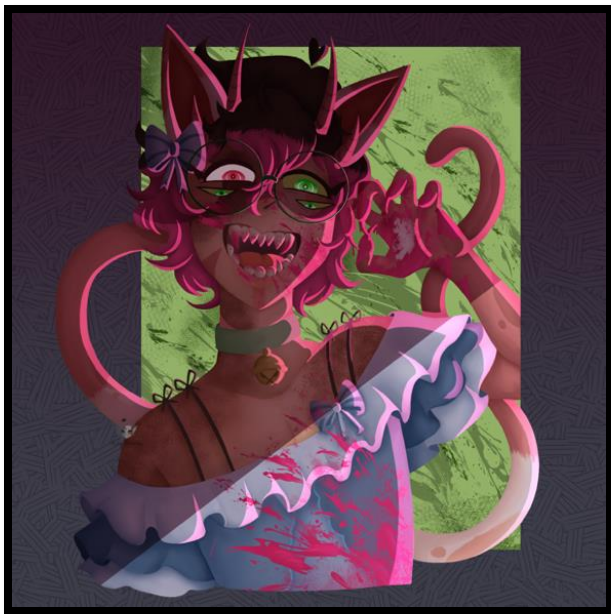
*Love Has Found a Home by LAWD*



*The Curse That Binds Me by Kai Goehry Jocson*



*The Dragon That Collects the Stars by Adriana Orozco*



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*Taylor by Salma Pimentel*





*Tyler by Salma Pimentel*



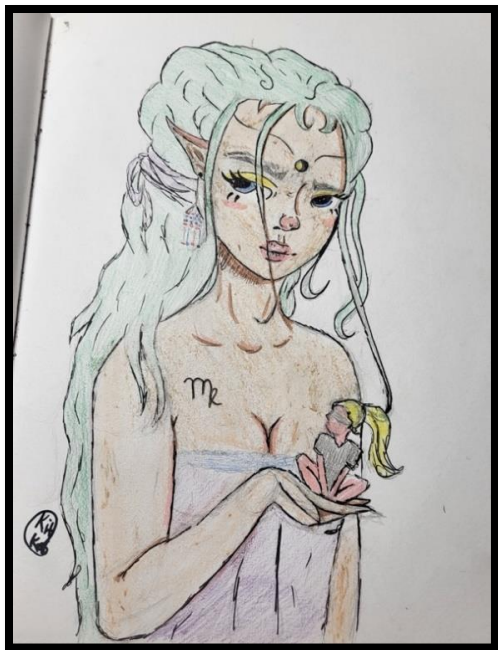
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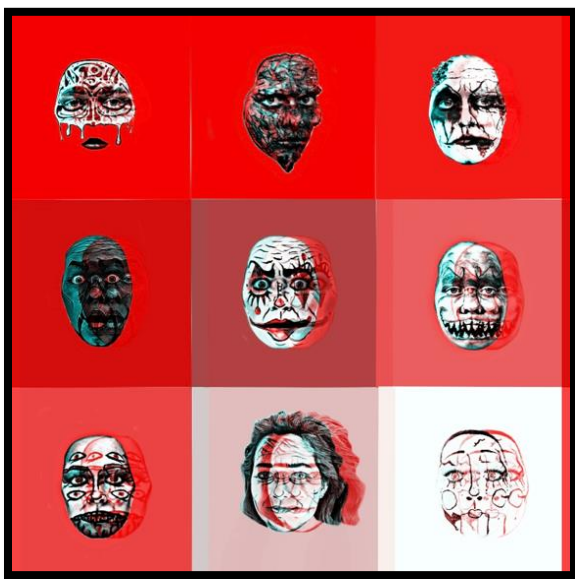


*1.JPG by Rheanne Vegas*



*2.JPG by Rheanne Vegas*





*It's Complicated by Julia Lindsay*



*Winter by Triston Miller*

## **The Man Who Never Knew**

Julia Lindsay

Tulips hang, strung high like lights  
Igniting dancers down below  
Blue and glowing, young and bright  
Swirling, whirling, all aglow

He's in his suit, she's in her dress  
Friends and family everywhere  
Vows of love and faithfulness  
Sitting still, I simply stare

Years ago, our golden youth  
Running through the fields of flowers  
Stargazing and Baby Ruth  
Telling tales for countless hours

Later, we stood on a stage  
Gowns and tassels, side by side  
Degrees, diplomas all the rage  
We puffed our chests out, filled with pride

If anything on earth would count  
I had faith in he and I  
Even after debts would mount  
So I stood there, hopes held high

He watched cars beneath us mill  
I watched him and prayed to stay  
Right there on the window sill  
Inside that moment, tucked away

We reunited at the train  
He said he missed my company  
It began to lightly rain  
We held each other silently

Tulips light the floor below  
This is the best day of their life  
Soon, rice will dot the floor like snow  
From girl and boy to man and wife

Cursing what I never told  
The torture seems to never end  
There I sit, dress stained and old  
As she marries my best friend

As colors dim and drown in gloom  
With painful deja vu  
My mind again is dwelling on  
The man who never knew.

### **My Poem**

Alyssa Stewart

So much depends on the choices we make,  
In the paths we choose and the risks we take.  
With each decision, our futures designed,  
An intense painting our life's grand design.

## A Tendril of Human Connection

Alexis Qualls

### *Darkness...*

Sweaty palms,  
Pounding heart,  
Labored breathing.  
Scattered thoughts,  
Loss of direction.  
No brightness.  
No sight.  
No direction,  
No warmth.  
No help,  
No connection.  
No one's there.  
No friends.  
Will I ever?  
Always be alone?  
Panic.  
No help,  
No friends,  
No hope.

*Boom! / Knock, knock. Click, click.*

Warmth of a hug,  
Brush of breath.  
Someone's there,  
Someone's help.  
I *do* have someone.  
Eyes opening,  
There's sight.

There's direction,  
There's bright,  
There's hope.  
There's a guide,  
A friend,

A rope.  
Calm.  
Breath slowing,  
Heart steadying,  
Hands smooth.  
And then there was...  
*light.*

**Prime Time**  
**LAWD**

May these words touch you today  
like the sun does  
we often lose sight of the day  
by fighting with the shadows of yesterday  
we must be able to choose wisely  
which energies we entertain  
with our attention and time  
This is our Lifetime  
Not a waiting line  
What are we waiting for?  
This is our time  
To do our Thang  
While it's still Prime Time

## **Escapism**

Alexis Qualls

It's time to get lost,  
Time to get tossed,  
Time to get across  
This world and into a new one,

So...

Today I'll pick a new book,  
Though I don't quite know where to look.

This time a fantasy? Where reality is left behind and worlds  
collide? A place with a sparkling brook?

Maybe a history? To a time when life was simpler and fuller. To  
worlds with a crook. Perhaps a contemporary? A story with a  
modern outlook.

No, I think I'll skip the modern, I come to escape that  
gobbledygook.

I think I'll pick a world full of dragons, and heroes, and  
adventure that'll leave me shook.

This place must be full of heroines and heroes, hydras  
and hippogryphs, and perhaps a  
handsome hunk, the ones only found in a book.

For I come, yet again, to escape what is real and boring,  
to curl up into the deep desires of my heart...

Though it will be a tough pick, whatever I decide on,  
today, tomorrow, and Tuesday I'm sure  
it'll make a good hook.

## **What Is the Fate of This World?**

Alexis Qualls

To all my friends, my family, and foes,  
We walk together no matter the weather.  
To love thy neighbor is the best of roles,  
But (though/still) to love thy enemy is better.

In this world we walk in an unseen mire;  
A muck of pride, of selfishness, and hate.  
We build ourselves up, though we're mere liars.  
With these habits what shall be our fate?

But then what must we do to change our fates?  
Look to the cross, and follow the Shepherd.  
One's care for others shows much of our traits.  
In these your life will surely be measured.

So what will you choose for your life on earth?  
Your decision will affect more than just worth.

## **To Go Alone**

Flora Ibarra

We so desperately crave love  
But fear a turned heart,  
A caress changed to clawed clutching,  
Secrets spread -- not kept sacred,  
A confidant revealed as saboteur.

(Shifting eyes, keep aware.)

A cloak of betrayal dropped;  
A shroud of grief and mistrust--  
carried forevermore,  
Secured my memories nailed to the heart.

(It warms and chills, both.)

Displaced air on lips, no breath  
Shaking hands of withdrawal.  
Love is a drug and these what-ifs--  
Better than rehab.

(Couldn't say no, why did you go?)

We withdraw before it burns  
-- before it warms  
Our hands ripped from soft grips  
Safe from claws not yet grown.

(We're cold, so cold -- please.)

We've withdrawn-- shaking breaths  
coloring the air, a fog hard to see through  
No one to turn to-- no saboteur.  
Isolation or self defense?

(White fingers gasping at nothing.)

The changed heart is Ours  
But no one will know -- There's no one to see.

(And the warmth is gone.)



## **The Weight of Words**

Triston Miller

It was a fun night; I had stayed over at Miguel's house since it was the weekend and schools were out. We stayed up late playing video games and watching movies on the DVD player. The next day, we woke up and were ready to begin the day. His mom made us some huevos rancheros, then we went to the park to hang out.

We got to the park and there were other kids there playing tag on the playground. We decided to go to the swings since there were less people in that area. Miguel and I then held a competition to see who could swing the highest, and Miguel won. After this we had gotten thirsty, so we walked to the store to spend the 10 dollars his dad had given us for drinks. As we were walking into the store, I noticed there were not as many people there as usual.

We went in and began scanning the aisles, looking around and debating what to buy when, suddenly, we heard arguing. A white man at the counter screaming at a Hispanic customer because they did not speak English.

He was chanting the slur, "Beaner" and screaming at the confused man, "Go back to your country if you cannot learn English".

Knowing this individual couldn't understand him, the cashier chose to continue to belittle and berate him because of the individual's ethnicity. My friend and I looked at each other and were left speechless. I was slightly scared, but I couldn't imagine how my friend had felt. We were young, only 14, but we were still old enough to comprehend the hate this person had for people who were labeled brown. We grabbed our drinks and chips, paid for them, and left without saying a word to the cashier.

My friend and I went back to the park to play, but he didn't seem as happy to be there. In the back of his mind was the thought of that being him in that store if he had not been taught English at such a young age.

As we walked home, the setting sun cast long shadows on our path. In their stretching darkness, I made a silent promise...

not just to Miguel but to myself. I promised that I would never be the voice that drives someone to silence. I would be the one to speak up, even if my voice shook, even if the words were hard to find. We were young, but even young voices can echo against injustice.

## **Gut Feelings**

Brittani Hackett-Little

Gut feeling that was exactly what this was. A new guy in town, vicious murder, and rare books. There had to be a connection. Samantha needed to follow this lead. They hadn't taught detectives that gut feelings are leads to follow, however Samantha couldn't shake what the neighbors and friends of Henry's that she had interviewed that morning. The connection must be Sam.

Samantha decided to pay a visit to Sam, who had recently moved to Whispering Pines only a few months earlier. She found him in his little worn-down cottage only about 10 minutes from Henry's house. Samantha knocked on the door, only to be answered before Samantha could finish knocking. Sam stood at the door wearing a pale blue shirt and some checkered shorts and greeted her with a warm smile. "Good morning, Detective. How can I help you? What brings you here" Sam questioned, full of confidence and a grin on his face that Samantha saw right through

. Samantha felt something was off about this man. She had only met the man a handful of times though, but something in her gut told her something wasn't quite right. Samantha looked at him, her eyes glaring deep into his soul, if a man like him could have one and said "I'm here about Henry Turner. He was found dead this morning in his house." Samantha stands straighter and sternly adds to the conversation before Henry gets a chance to reply, "How well did you know Henry?"

"Oh my. I haven't heard of it yet. I'm so sorry. Henry was a stand-up guy. Even though I only moved here about 4 months ago, I am a regular at Henry's bookstore. I often stop by in the

afternoons to browse and drink some of their amazing coffee. You've had their coffee right? If not we should definitely go get some, I'll pay"

Sam was shooting his shot and not for one second did Samantha believe a word that came out of this Ken doll's mouth.

Samantha chuckled standing in an authoritative stance and replied "See I'm not here for coffee, I'm here for answers and so far you haven't given me any. What else would you like to share with me" Before she could add anymore that was a noise from the next room.

"Actually detective, I have to get going. I must be at a meeting in 20 minutes, but here's my cell phone number, if you have any more questions or maybe want to take me up on that coffee date." and with that Sam stood up and motioned Samantha to the front door. Samantha's gut told her this was the man, the man that viciously murdered the beloved towns bookstore owner.

All Samantha needed now was the proof. Back in town, Samantha was desperate for answers. She stopped by the local café, where a group of regulars had gathered to discuss the latest town gossip, mostly having to do with the Gruelson murder that had only happened a day ago.

Juan, the owner of the café, spoke up as Samantha walked in the front door, "Detective look I don't want to point fingers, but I did see Sam hanging around Henry's bookstore a lot. He seemed a bit too interested in those rare books. He just rubs me the wrong way"

Alice, the town schoolteacher, chimed in, "And I overheard them arguing once, about a week ago. Henry looked really upset. I couldn't understand a lot, but I heard books come up."

Samantha thanked them for their information, got a cup of coffee to go and headed back to the police station.

Once at the police station and after her cup of coffee she was ready to get to work, ready to answer all the questions that were shaking through the town. Samantha dug deep inside of Sam's life. He had a long-term girlfriend prior

to moving here and a 13-year-old son that his ex has full custody of. That wasn't what she needed though. Samantha wanted to find the motive Sam had to kill Henry, there was not a doubt in her mind that Sam was the one responsible. She decided to review Henry's financial records, hoping they might shed light on the motive for the murder.

As she pored over the records, just as she was about to give up, something caught her eye. It appeared that Henry had recently sold a rare book to Sam at an exorbitant price, well above its market value. Samantha began to piece the puzzle together. She now had a possible motive for Sam killing Henry. Money was the center of all evil.

The drive up to Sam's cottage Samantha's gut feeling just got stronger the closer she got to the cottage. When Samantha got there she confronted him with her findings. "Sam look, I'm not looking to play some game of yours. Sam, I know you bought a rare book from Henry recently. And that you bought it at a steep price. Can you explain why the price was so high?"

Sam's demeanor shifted, and he replied, "I was willing to pay whatever it took to acquire that book. It was invaluable to me it is my favorite and a one in a lifetime chance to own it myself."

Samantha wasn't convinced, she pressed further. "And did Henry know about the book's true value? Did he realize its significance?"

Sam hesitated once again before saying, "Look I am not your guy. I know what you are thinking. Yes, I bought a book for a high price. Yes, he knew. He knew everything about the book. But he wouldn't sell it to me until recently. Now unless you are here to arrest me I don't have time for these insane accusations. You can find yourself at the door."

Samantha got up and walked to the front door, but before stepping out Samantha let out "I may not be here to arrest you now, but I will be soon. You can bet on that." Samantha's suspicion deepened.

She decided to obtain a search warrant for Sam's cottage. When she and her team got to the cottage, Sam answered the door.

“What the hell is wrong with you guys? You really think I murdered someone?”

Samantha and her team entered the cottage, they uncovered a hidden compartment in the living room behind the couch filled with rare books from Henry's collection. With the evidence stacked against him, Sam automatically confessed to the murder as the detectives found the book. Sam explained that he had become obsessed with the rare book and believed that Henry was withholding it from him. The argument in the bookstore had escalated, leading to a violent confrontation. The confrontation ended with Henry's head hitting the corner of one of the tables.

“He was dead... I didn't mean to.... I just wanted that book.”

Before anything else could be said Samantha had taken out her hand cuffs and placed them on Sam.

“Like I said I wasn't here to play games and now you are under arrest. You have the right to remain silent....”

As Samantha led Sam away in handcuffs, the town of Whispering Pines breathed a collective sigh of relief. The mystery of Henry Turner's murder had been solved and justice had been served. The next night Samantha was climbing into her bed feeling so much relief of solving Henry's murder and bringing justice to his friends and the community.

She had just taken off her big brown rimmed glasses and got under her soft fuzzy blanket when, “Chirp, Chirp.” Her phone went off with a text message. Eyes barely open, Samantha debasing on looking at it.

She sits up and reads, “You really think you caught the real criminal? You caught who I wanted you to catch. You told Sam you didn't play games, but you're playing mine like cat and mouse. Maybe you're not quite the detective everyone thinks you are Samantha Marie.”



*Disappointed DM by Kai Goehry Jocson*

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## Meet Your Editors



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