Make Your Mark

Young Georgia Author 2020

9th GRADE

Make Your Mark

Young Georgia Author 2020

Honeybee Sonnet

by

Monica Calderon

Dalton High School

Honeybee Sonnet

The honeybees are black with golden lines,

Their tiny wings fly up and down all night.

The furry fuzz on their body is fine,

With big dark eyes and stingers too; a fright

O, but they give the gift of their honey.

Thankful are we for this amazing sweet

It falls graceful like beloved money,

Honey is just like heaven as a treat.

But don't you see, the honeybees going?

The dying poor species, we can't allow

Time to start doing our share and helping.

We have to change our ways to save them now.

The honeybees are treasures to our Earth,

You see, therefore must not forget their worth.

Make Your Mark

Young Georgia Author 2020

Corkscrew

by

Vanessa Ruby Chavez

Dalton High School

"Corkscrew"

In the bland town of Corkscrew, strange things were happening, hidden beneath the boring picture it painted. Magic seemed to roam the air, yet it went unnoticed. The people of this town overlooked all the evil happening right in front of them. But Max Benway didn't. Although he may have lived a dull life, working at a coffee shop owned by his strict parents, he still had the most creative mind you'd ever seen. However, no one would ever believe him when he told them about the crazy things he saw. Max was starting to question his own sanity.

But one night, a mysterious customer wobbled into the restaurant.

Max took out his notepad and bluntly repeated his line, "Welcome to Cool Coffee. How may I help you?"

Silence.

Max looked up from his notepad. There was a shadow as black as the night. As the clock ticked 8:30 p.m., the shadow slid through the glass door, on to roam the moonlit streets of Corkscrew. Max closed shop. After he switched the sign and went upstairs, he couldn't sleep. The shadow's aura still lingered. But maybe it *was* just his imagination. He shrugged it off and continued his boring life.

The next morning, Cool Coffee was busy as ever. But, something was different.

"MAX! GET IN HERE!" It was his father.

Max slumped into the kitchen and saw a coffee spill on the floor.

He gulped, "I didn't do this! Maybe one of the customers' kids broke in and made the mess! I-"

"QUIT YOUR YAPPING! Stop tryin' to blame the customers. What business do they have bein' over here, anyway? Just clean up this mess!"

He knew he didn't spill the coffee. But if it wasn't him, then who was it? No one else but him and his parents were even allowed to step *foot* in the kitchen. He didn't know what to do. As 8:25 rolled along, Max heard the cheery ring of the door again.

He groaned, "Welcome to Cool Coffee."

It was the shadow again. This was no dream. Max concentrated on the shadow, but 8:30 struck and the shadow was gone again. The next weeks were full of mishaps in the kitchen! Max spent the rest of his afternoons cleaning up messes he didn't make. But he just had an idea of who might be making these messes: the mysterious shadow.

That Saturday morning, he kept his eyes peeled for the nameless shadow. But ten hours passed, and nothing happened. He began to lose hope. The door's metal bell rang and Max looked over to the entrance. Nothing entered.

He heard his father's dingy mumble, "*Stupid hooligans and their dumb pranks*."

But Max saw something come in. Maybe he was the only person who could actually *see* it. Nonetheless, something had entered, visible to the human eye or not. Then it happened: the donuts fell down.

Max's father stopped and yelled, "MAX! PICK UP THOSE DONUTS! AFTER THAT, YOU'RE FIRED!"

DING! The shadow escaped through the door again. But, Max had taken action and ran after the fume. Quickly, the shadow dove behind a dumpster to blend in with the dumpster's own broad silhouette in the black night. Max thought he saw it go inside, so he held his breath and flung himself into the garbage when he bumped heads with someone else.

"*OW!*" the stranger in the dumpster yelped. "What was that for?!"

Max backed away as much as he could, but there was limited space in the cramped box.

He asked, "W-who are you?!"

Max tried to make out a face, but all he could detect were streetlight lit googles on an oval head. The stranger took off his mask to reveal an average looking human.

The brunette stranger smiled wide as he stretched out his hand and presented himself, "Jack Maxwell: Self-employed detective."

Max accepted the handshake and introduced himself, "Max Benway: Recently fired coffee shop employee. W-what are you doing here anyway?"

"Well, I was hunting down strange magic."

"Me too!"

"Really? Maybe I could 'employ' you as my partner in tackling this craziness. I could use the help a-"

"Do I get a wacky costume too?!"

"Y-yes. Well, it looks like we've got an adventure to go on. I've been in the detective field for years now, and in all the things I've encountered, Corkscrew Town is certainly one of the more… *peculiar* places. The people here are dumb as rocks, yet the magic is so advanced. A black, shadowy figure that causes mischief lurks these corners."

"Well, back at the coffee shop, there was this shadowy figure who would make messes."

"*YOU'VE* encountered the shadow?! He's a mass murderer and he's gonna kill us all! Luckily, I have a map to the 'Shadow Realm.' But, it's a long journey. Are you *sure* you want to go through with it?"

"Of course!"

"We start tomorrow."

The following morning, Max and Jack went to the farthest corner of town. Jack held out one of his gadgets and blasted a portal. The pair strode in through the portal and they were teleported to a snowy mountain. They climbed up the mountain since the teleporter could not bring them directly to the realm due to magic force fields. The two eventually reached the highest peak where a gloomy cave stood.

There was a loud *BANG!* The pair looked over and saw a giant hooded figure. The hooded shapeshifter definitely had more physical features than they thought. Its rusted goggles popped out on his dark, wrinkled face like blowfish. His wide, evil grin displayed his yellow, crooked teeth.

"Ah, Max Benway!" the grand spirit boomed. "*And Jack Maxwell?* You two certainly are an odd pairing now, wouldn't you agree?"

Max stirred up the courage to ask, "W-why did you toy with me back at the café?"

"Max, I caused you all that misery, but I saved you from a world of hurt! You should be praising me! That place was awful. Wouldn't you agree?"

Max stayed silent.

"But, I can see you didn't let that stop you! You got fired and landed a new job on the same moon filled night! You truly are a messiah! Mr. Maxwell, wouldn't you agree?"

Jack replied, "Y-yes."

The shadow then picked Jack up from the ground. Jack squirmed around like an earthworm as he tried to escape the giant's grasp.

"Now…." the shadow continued, "Max Benway, wouldn't you agree that ol' 'Jackie-boy' here would look better *dead?*"

"W-what?" Max stuttered as he backed away. "N-n-no. No. He wouldn't. You can't be real! My-"

The shadow took one of his bony fingers and curled it up against Jack's arm and interrupted, "IS THIS REAL ENOUGH FOR YOU?!" He then proceeded to break Jack's arm.

"Stop!" Max yelled, running over to the shadow. "Please! I'm begging you!"

"Oh, but why? Taking lives really lets you feel the rush, you know? It's amazing! Max, wouldn't you agree?"

"No! I don't agree! Give me back my friend now or I'll-"

"Or you'll what?! You can't destroy me! I'm centuries old! You're not strong enough."

Jack screeched as he struggled to free himself from the devil's clutch, "No! Max, don't listen to him! The stupid thing's all in our heads. He can't be real! He's just air!"

The shadow struck Jack and exclaimed, "Quiet, you! I AM REAL. I just dwell in another plane of existence. But, I can cross the barrier that separates our worlds! You can't! So foolish mortal, enjoy these last few minutes of life before I strip you of them!"

Max charged at the spirit with a dagger and pierced him.

Nothing.

"BWAHAHAHAHAHA!" the shadow nearly fell back laughing. "What was that?! Ha, you humans really don't know anything, do you? I'm a shadow! You can't kill me with that! That's the equivalent of punching air!"

Jack wept as blood trickled down his face, while Max was left in shock with sweat trickling down his face. He'd already threatened, pleaded, and even attempted to attack it. There weren't many options left. So, he did the last thing he could think of.

"Take me instead," he murmured.

The shadow thought for a minute before giving his final answer, "No can do. Too risky. I'll tell you what I can do though: *Not* kill him. Deal?"

"YES!"

Gently, the shadow put Jack back on the floor and Max zoomed up to hug him, relieved. Then he stopped. A sudden thought had hit him like a bullet.

"*Wait...* " he started. "Why are you letting me off so easy?"

The shadow looked back at him and answered, "BECAUSE YOU'LL DO THE HONORS!"

Max stopped dead in his tracks. The shadow summoned a magic, crystal spear.

"Here," the shadow said eerily as he passed Max the weapon. "It should kill the boy in an instant. This specific spear is made out of 'Dijon Crystal.' This special item can kill anything! So, Max, a deal's a deal. I spared your friend's life. Play your part and end him. He wasn't worth much anyway. Lucky for you, he won't be killed by me, but at the hands of someone he trusted.

Isn't it dandy? And I still get the satisfaction of watching him die! It's a win-win! Wouldn't you agree, Mr. Benway?"

"Th-this isn't fair," Max stated. "What if I don't want to kill him? What happens then?"

"Well, if you want to chicken out of it all just like you coward away from confronting your parents, then I shall demolish the little speck of rock you call home. It's not like I have anything to lose. You, on the other hand, have everything to lose! All that progress: *gone*!"

The shadow got even closer to Max's face, looking him dead in the eye, and asked, "So, what'll it be, Max? Save one life, or billions of other *lives?* Just kill him already! Save the bigger lot!"

Max approached Jack, who was already bleeding out on the floor, gasping for air, and put the spear on his neck. As the Dijon Crystal almost impaled Jack's neck, the shadow's smile was widening. Out of sheer excitement, he let out a hoot. Max heard this, and knew it was his cue. He stopped and redirected the spear to aim for the shadow's tall body.

He had finally caught the creature off guard and stabbed it to death. Bits of the black shadow faded, one by one, and the irritating spirit was gone. Max sprinted up to Jack. He took off his trench coat and wrapped it around Jack's bleeding forehead. Jack coughed as he struggled to gain his strength again.

"Thanks," he finally choked out. "That was really brave of you. Stupid, yes, but brave. It was really risky too. He could have KILLED you right then and there if you betrayed and stabbed him any time else!"

He stopped. Jack saw a small frown on Max's face and realized he should really be celebrating, not scolding.

"Still," he started out, "I-I really appreciate the gesture. Your timing was amazing. I'm proud. Max, you really do make a good detective."

Max looked up at Jack, his eyes full of hope, "So, I can keep the job?"

"Yes. I've been meaning to hire an apprentice," Jack smiled.

Max smiled back and helped his partner up, "Let's get you to a hospital."

Make Your Mark

Young Georgia Author 2020

Beyond a Dream

by

Jasper Harrison

Morris Innovative High School

"Beyond a Dream"

Cosmo had no idea what she was doing here, out on a boat in the desolate waters of Jupiter, Florida. Her father stood by as wind whipped through their hair, bringing a smile to the older man's face. Cosmo and her father looked stunningly similar, from their big green eyes to their black as night hair. People always remarked their similarities, and it made Cosmo's father very proud. She couldn't care less though. Cosmo secretly wished she looked more like her mother, the woman she never met.

Cosmo's mother, her father's late wife, was a taboo topic within the family. Taboo in meaning, everyone would go completely silent if she was brought up, no matter how much Cosmo begged for information. Just a picture, even. She knew nothing about who her mother was, what she looked like, or why she was no longer around. It made her resentful towards her father, despite knowing that the withdrawal of information was, in her father's opinion, for her best interest.

"Did you hear me, Cosmo?" Her father prodded her with his elbow, earning a loud grunt.

"Sorry dad, I wasn't paying attention, what did you say?" Cosmo had lowered her voice with the stopped of the engine, realizing they were now in the middle of no-where. Motor made waves lapped at the side of the boat and gently splashed over, soon calming with the stillness of everything else. Her father gleamed with pride, starting to pull out his fishing equipment.

"This is the perfect spot. Plenty of suckers who'll bite today. Yep! It's the perfect day for fishing." Cosmo sighed at her father's antics, slumping down farther in her seat. The sun felt especially targeting today, but it might've been her all black outfit's fault. She was never the type

to dress appropriately for the scene, rather going with whatever her heart demanded that day. On this day, it demanded a dark, brooding outfit sure to catch anyone who sails by off guard.

"Oh!" Cosmo's father exclaimed, stumbling back into his seat, "Something bit my line. Cosmo, come look at it! It's a big one!" Still holding on to the fishing rod with one hand, Cosmo's father used the other to pull her closer to the edge of the boat. She grumbled and peered down into the water, her eyes squinting just to get a sight of what her father was talking about.

"What? Dad, I don't see anything," But she was quickly cut off as her father yelled for her to get back, a huge fish soaring out of the water. Cosmo tried to duck, but she couldn't move fast enough, and got smacked hard in the chest by a huge fish. It knocked her straight off the boat and into the water, whereas her dad tried to catch her before she plummeted deeper into the sea. She tried to scream for her father, but salt water quickly filled her mouth, causing her to choke. Her legs felt like lead as she watched her father dive into the water after her. That was the last thing Cosmo saw as her eyes fell shut, until...

Suddenly Cosmo was floating in pitch blackness, with only tiny specks of light from faraway places to guide her eyes. The space she floated in felt empty, cold, and alone. She called out for her father, or someone, but no sound left her mouth. "*Am I...dead?*" She knew this news should come as a shock to her, but for some reason, she couldn't feel the fear she knew she should feel. Cosmo couldn't feel anything actually.

"You aren't dead." Voices boomed. Cosmo looked around frantically for the source of the sound, but it rang from everywhere. Before she had a chance to think again, an apparition appeared in front of her. Dark as the void around her, but somehow still visible. It had no one

single form, constantly morphing into shapes that, even though Cosmo could see, somehow didn't exist. The shape was everything, yet somehow nothing. "You aren't dead," the voices repeated. They sounded rough, yet soft. Loud, yet quiet. It rumbled in her hear cataclysmically, shaking her to her core. Then, again, "But stuck in limbo. Your soul attempted to leave your body, but a something strong is keeping you from leaving. Tell me child, what is it that stops you from entering the arms of eternity?"

Cosmo stared blankly at the entity, her thoughts tangled like cords. She started to speak, but the words did not come. Her eyes struggled to keep focus on its ever-morphing form. She couldn't find the way to speak. Only this time, the only thing preventing her from uttering those words, was herself. "My dad," She finally broke, "I couldn't leave him behind. My mom is already gone, and even though he won't tell me why she's gone,"

"Oh child," They moaned with dejection, hushing her, "You feel the pain of loss, and that is great. We too were ripped from our matriarch, forced to rule a land that is so expanse and lonely. But we no longer feel alone, finding you in our midst. Do not abandon faith in the world. You are not yet alone. Return to your body and continue this life. But first, I will grant you one wish." Cosmo could only think of one thing.

"Tell me about my mother."

Suddenly, she was back in her body, lying in the bottom of the boat with her father hovering over her. Cosmo coughed up seawater with a groan, shivering in her soaked clothes. As her father cried out in joy and wrapped his strong arms around her, Cosmo was flooded with memories of a beautiful woman with strawberry blonde hair and freckles like delicate stars. Her voice bloomed like roses in Cosmo's head, filling her with indescribable sorrow. None of these memories belonged to her, but she could feel the love they held. Cosmo's mother held a similarly space themed name to her, and it was Nova.

"Tell me about Nova. That's my mom, right?" Cosmo questioned, resting her head on her dad's chest. She heard a sigh come from him, feeling his heartbeat through his chest. It seemed to quicken at the idea of coming clean.

"I never wanted to hide her from you. It hurt me as much as it hurt you. But your mother was beautiful, and she loved you very much. She died during birth. I didn't want you to think it was your fault." Cosmo felt her voice catch in her throat. She never knew that her dad felt this way. "I'm sorry, I should have never kept it from you. From now on, no secrets, okay? Can you forgive me?" There was silence, at first.

Then, "I forgive you."

Make Your Mark

Young Georgia Author 2020

What It's Like to be Hispanic

by

Angelly Lemus-Delgado

Morris Innovative High School

What it's like to be Hispanic

I was called for an interview at a filming studio in Kennesaw, Georgia. I didn't know why. "Maybe I could get a new job, maybe I could get money to afford a new house!" I thought in my head. I entered a huge office full of blonde men and women with fancy suits. While I was walking into the room, a lot of them kept looking at me. "Maybe it's because I don't look like them." I assumed. I went inside a room and a man on a camera said "Action!" There was a funny man in a suit and asked me, "What is it like to be Hispanic?"

Flashing back to 2007... "Ms. Delgado, your daughter is ill, I don't think the environment she is living in at this moment is healthy. Is there by any chance you can afford a flight to the United States?" said the doctor. "I don't have money not even for food!" my mother sobbed. As they were talking, I was in a chair crying. My natural hair was gone. I was tired of being broke, sick, and hungry. I was never mad at my mom because I know how hard she worked just so I could have one boiled egg. The next day my mom talked to me about crossing la frontera. The plan was to get on a train named "el tren del muerte" (the train of death).

After I was done packing my two shirts and only shorts, I said bye to my family members and started walking. After a while I was tired and took a break. I was hungry and out of breath. We ran into a group of men named Luiz Hera and Ivan Cruz from Honduras, and they gave us a ride across Mexico. Three days later, we made it to Chihuahua and were surrounded by an "army?" is what I thought. Luiz Hera asked if there was a problem as a distraction and was shot in the left side of his chest, when we heard the shot we ran away from the scene. Ivan Cruz broke down after running away. "Luiz was my best friend. Of course he would

take a bullet for me!" He say in tears. I didn't know what to do because I've never seen a man cry. I was only three years old, just witnessed a man getting shot, and I had to run miles away.

By the time we got close to the train tracks, we heard the train hoot. The hardest part of the trip was to jump on the train, or we'll miss it. "Listen baby, I have to trust you, okay? Get on my back and don't let go!" My mom told me. When my mom jumped on the train, I grabbed onto a ladder and helped my mom on. A lady from Mexico helped my mom and me on the train, so we could rest easy on the top of the train. While we were crossing I and my mom prayed.

Two days later, I get off the train and saw a scary looking man with a beard and lots of extra skin. We asked if we could get a ride to another train that would go to New York. My mom offered her gold necklace as payment. He opened the door and nodded his head, so we got in. Sixteen hours later, we made it to the train in Alabama and paid the man the necklace. My mom went into a shop near the train for a few minutes. When she came out her gold bracelets were gone, but in her hand was American money. Using the money we bought tickets for the train. I saw a little girl who had a chocolate in her hand, she noticed how hungry I was so she threw it on the ground. In El Salvador, we either eat or starve. So I picked it up and ate it, it was nasty, but I was hungry.

We arrived to New York and I met my Tia for the first time. My mom didn't want to see my dad, because of their "adult problems". My dad had two jobs but no home, he sleeps in his car. My Tia gave me some food. I didn't like it. "American food is so strange," I thought to myself. Hours later, my Tia gave me and my mom a ride to the city so I could see my real dad and visit my older

brother. While we were driving around exploring the rich city my mom told me my brother lives with her step-sister. We made it to the subways and I finally got to meet my dad. My dad had a serious face, and I didn't know how to react. My mom left me with him and told me she will be back soon. I asked her where she is going, she told me that she was pregnant with a baby in her stomach, and she has to check if it's okay.

Four weeks later my mom had a baby boy, and she came to where my dad and I sleep. During those four weeks I stayed with my cousin Angel. He was a short, skinny, pale little boy with brown hair. I've been struggling in understanding words, and the money. I was too young to be this confused. Weeks later my dad got a house so we could live peacefully. It was two weeks before my 4th birthday, and I wanted to share it with Angel since he was only a day older than me. We invited classmates to something called a party, they have balloons, cake, and something they call toys. "What is a toy?" I asked. He ran to his room and got a car with a remote that you can control. "Try it" he said with a grin, while passing me the control. I grabbed the control and started playing with it, "playing is fun" I said with a smile and a laugh.

It was August 16, 2008, and we had our party. I saw a lot of balloons and paper on the walls. I felt weird because for my first three birthdays, I've always have a piece of bread with a boiled egg. I started seeing the American way and the difference between the way I grew up and the way others grew up. Some kids grew up with toys, home, shoes, money and natural hair...I grew up with no bed, no break, no cake, no hair, no money...I grew up with no good life.

Flash-forward to the present, the man asks "So with this whole flashback, tell me what made you who you are today and why?" I look around, and see people in no tears. "I grew up different. Some adults tell me I don't know what I'm talking about, and that I don't know anything about life because I'm just a teenage girl." I said while tearing up. "I know what life is... because I started off with the worst." A women who happened to be racist stands up and says "Get out of here with your fake story! You're just a kid, you know nothing! Even I grew up with a little bit of corn and bread and still ate 3 times a day!" I wasn't going to argue, but I was going to ask some questions. "Did you have to sleep on the messed up concrete as a three year old? Did your hair ever fall off? Did you have to jump on a train with your pregnant mom while the train was still moving? Did you have to eat from the floor? Have you ever been to school not knowing what people say, or having people not knowing what you want to say? "

For the past 10 years I've been here. I've been told that I am stupid, I can't do anything, I was always judged because of my story. There is no need to tell me I can't do things because I know I can. There is no need for someone to assume my life when they have never seen what I've seen, and no one has ever. So for the last time the funny man asked me "What is it like to be Hispanic". I look at the camera and say "...Walk a mile in my shoes to find out more."

Make Your Mark
Young Georgia Author 2020

My Glass Rose

by

Anjleena Mutahir

Dalton High School

My Glass Rose

There's something,
Something precious
So fragile, that it cannot be revealed
It's called, a glass rose.

It has an aura,
an aura that is easeful
So calming, that it can soften any soul
It's called, a glass rose.

Its petals are one of a kind,
a kind that plays with the eyes
So sculpted, that it seems water has been frozen in time
It's called, a glass rose.

It holds a value,
a value that matters much more than a investment
So rich, that it can please by displaying itself
It's called, a glass rose.

Everybody has one
One they hold close to their heart—person or piece
So dear, that they rather sacrafice themselves than share
I call the one I posses, my glass rose.

Make Your Mark
Young Georgia Author 2020

Ouroboros' Tale

by

Bella Salaices

Dalton High School

Ouroboros' Tale

A weight has attached itself onto you.
With this burden comes maleficent loathe
And a mindset that can't help but be blue.
This heaviness has concluded your growth.
You fool! Have you not noticed my mistake?
I am you: a sorrowful helpless pawn.
Upon reflection, I'm the one who aches.
This parasite makes me feel very dawn.
If I could, I'd live my life all again.
A second chance would be my holy grail.
What if I were to repeat my fault then?
I don't know any better than to fail.
Alteration will free me from my gyve.
A second chance will not help me to strive.

Make Your Mark

Young Georgia Author 2020

Last Friday Night

by

Isabel Vela

Morris Innovative High School

Last Friday Night

I regret Friday night… I regret I regret I regret. If anything I would take it back in a heartbeat. First I have to stop and rewind a bit and introduce myself. Hello, my name is Jessie Lopez, and I live in California. I'm 15 years old and a sophomore in high school at the moment. I have many friends, but I only trust like three people, Sofia, Juan, and Mateo. I thought I should mention them because I actually love them to death! I have a pretty good life, nothing bad or depressing. Everything was going just fine, but last Friday, I knew my life was going to change.

I wake up every day at 6:30AM to start getting ready for school, but that day I ended up barley waking up at 7:00 sharp. The bad thing for me waking up at 7AM is that my bus comes at 7:10, and that's barley enough time to get myself together. Anyways, surprisingly I got ready in time and I was able to get on the bus with no rush. Even though I woke up late, my morning hadn't been that bad.

I entered school and saw my best amigos were waiting on me when I strolled into the commons area where most students gather to talk before class begins. I swear every time I see them, I always have a big ugly smile on my face. Carrying on, we all head to different directions and go to our first, second and third period. I would talk about what I learned about math, history, and foreign language, but I don't want to bore you even more.

Anyways I start heading to lunch, and I see my stupid silly friends already sitting at the table. I was going to ask all of them how their classes went, but Sofia interrupted me immediately, got up from her seat, grabbed my wrist with a firm grip and ran to the restroom.

While we got in there, I lost my breath, but she hit me with the "You have any plans today, or should I say later tonight".

With a grin on her face, I gave her a weird expression and said "Well I don't know, depends what it is, it's nothing illegal right?"

"Let's sneak out tonight. For starters we haven't snuck out in foreverrr, and also these two guy's invited me to go smoke and drink with them… and they asked me to invite a cute friend, and since you're hot, I decided to take you, my love". She said with a bigger grin and jokingly winking at me.

After that I gave her a dumb look and I didn't know what to say. I just looked at her and told her, "I don't know. Do you even know these guys? What if something bad happens?"

"Jessie, loosen up a bit don't worry. I have known these guys for at least a good two weeks, and if something does happen we have each other".

She kept bugging me about it so I ended up agreeing, and we left the bathroom and continued our day.

Further into the day, it's now around 10:00 PM and I'm lying in bed with my phone in my hand watching Netflix, and I'm half asleep. I slept till 1AM until I woke up when I heard a strange noise in my closet. I got up quietly to go open the closet door… and right before I touched the knob, Sofia jumped out and covered my mouth so I wouldn't scream. She was trying so hard not to laugh, and I'm surprised my parents didn't hear all the noise.

I pushed her off because I thought I almost have a heart attack. "How did you even get in my room, stupid?" I said with a scared timid tone. Still, she ended up replying with an attitude, but still laughing.

"Um, you don't remember that you gave me an extra key to your house dummy". I ended up forgetting that I did that, and then I started getting a bit ready just to go out because what if the boys were cute or whatever.

As I finished getting ready, we went out my backdoor, and I start following her. Ten minutes into the walk, I saw that we were heading to the quiet side of town and also mostly heading to the woods, I paused and grabbed her "I don't think this is a good idea Sofia. I mean you barley know these guys anyways".

"Nena, listen to me. There's nothing to worry about, as I told you earlier in school today. I know these guys and we'll be perfectly fine" said Sofia with a calm voice.

After she said that, I just agreed again and continued walking. Ten more minutes later we get there, and we saw the guys there waiting. I tried checking them both out, and surprisingly they we're really attractive guys. Tall, dark hair, they had small tattoos on their arms, and deep voices. I got lost in their voices when they we're talking, and I just stared at them smiling like a dummy.

We all got to know each other more and their names we're Luis and Dante and 16 years old. All of us were having a great time and we ended up smoking some pot… well a lot of it, and I got really drunk.

It was all good and everything until Dante and Luis we're getting really touchy and telling Sofia and me they wanted to do stuff. Sofia and I busted out laughing because we thought they were joking. They got into a more serious tone and asked us again that if they can do stuff to us again.

At that point I felt my palms getting sweaty, and Sofia and I again giggled a bit and declined. They both got up and grabbed us on our wrists with a strong grip and tried pulling us to their car. I tried pulling back, but his grip was to strong, so I decided to kick him really hard in his area and he fell to the ground and let go. The other guy got distracted with what I did and Sofia was able to do the same thing.

We both started running as fast as we could, and right before we we're about to leave the woods, something hit me in the head really hard and I fell into the ground, face first. Then I heard Sofia asking me if I was okay, and then I looked up at her and she was crying. I remember the painful screams Sofia was making, and the face she made was so horrifying. She was starting to lose color everywhere.

That was the last thing I saw until everything turned black, and I'm pretty sure I lost consciousness. I woke up with my parents around me and a doctor right beside me. Those few seconds I woke up, I snapped back to reality and came to the realization that I was at the hospital, and I started crying telling my parents how sorry I was.

They told me that it wasn't my fault, but I know it is. After a couple of minutes I calmed down a bit, and a police officer came in the room he was asking me if I was okay. I just nodded my head even though I had a big aching pain in the back of my head from the fall, but then he ended up telling me that he was the one that brought my friend and I to the hospital and he got the two guys.

The really scary thing is that they weren't 16 and their names weren't Luis and Dante, they're both 21 years old and he told me their names but I forgot, but then I came to the

conclusion if that police officer wasn't their my friend and I probably would of gotten violated, and whatever else they wanted to do.

I just hope that Sofia is okay, and also I learned a new lesson from this. As this whole experienced traumatized me, I don't plan on sneaking out and hanging out with people I don't know that well.

Make Your Mark
Young Georgia Author 2020

Call of the Wolf

by

Itzal-Mayel Velazquez

Morris Innovative High School

Call of the Wolf

Wise, and calm, my spiritual shadow I became very close, but the other you know as in like friends, how did I warm up with a spirit? Well it was hard at first but I then learned to trust it. No it doesn't have a gender but I named it Mystery. My name is Aileen faith Wilson I'm 14 years old and this is my story. I grew up in a very wealthy family my mom Amelia Rina Wilson, she is a famous actress. She loves to take part of action movies or about drama. Every once or twice a week always a call for her to go to a photo shoot or practice the role of the character she takes part in the movie. She is the best mom she is kind and caring and really loves me and my sister dearly. My dad is a tech guy his name Justin Andrew Wilson. He is an engineer, but mostly he is an inventor... He is very caring towards us. I have a twin sister, and her name is Lorena Faith Wilson she loves fashion, and beauty.

People say whenever we go "you girls look the same, how does your mom tell you two apart?'' I just simply just shrug. I am not the person who likes to well confront people. But trust me it gets irritating. My sister and I may look the same, but we are not. I don't act like her she always loves to get what she wants. Every time my sister sees something she is interested as maybe jewelry or shoes, and even clothing she would ask mom or dad to buy it. Every time we would go on trips she would ask for very expensive perfume, clothing and shoes. I never ask for much compared to her all she cares about is money and fame. She also doesn't pay that much attention towards our parents especially me. Yes I am like an enemy than her sister she would always turn everything into a competition and would even insult me in some way. Despite her "Flaws" yes I do love my family very much even my sister even though she doesn't seem to back.

We recently moved here in the city around last month. Short summery of the story, back at our old home it was a small town, although yes we lived at a house a bit far from the neighborhoods

I liked it. My mom would arrange a chauffeur to drive me and my sister to school. Keep in mind we had to keep our identity's private (when it was 7th grade year) Yes I am proud to be in a family full of fame and luxury, but being rich is not that important to me or easy. Plus it gets annoying whenever we go there would be at least a crowd of people and journalists always interviewing us. That happened when we first moved to the town you know "to try something different" as my mom would say. At some point the school seems to notice what happens with me and my sister's relationships towards the other students of the school. And well they decided to contact the school board about how I and my sister attending there kind of causes "distractions". Of course my mom was trying her best not to argue with them, especially my dad he never liked the "excuse" they gave.

In 8th grade, my sister and I had to change our looks and our names. I went with the name "Madison", and my sister "Maddie". Since we have to keep it more of a secret, my mom signed me and my sister up to instead be dropped off from a normal school bus. I didn't mind. Oh but you guessed it my sister was very mean about it she says how she can't go to a poor transportation service and how she thinks that it might make her more stressed than she already "is." I could not believe what I was hearing at dinner by the way it was months after the meeting from the school board, any ways my mom did talk some sense to her but my sister she pouted like a brat. My sister was mad at mom and dad for the decision. Guess what especially me. She blamed me for having to live a "common life style." Of course, I got mad, and she gave me the "silent treatment." At some point, my sister needs to learn that in life in the real world is not a fancy life style. But obviously it seems my sister doesn't get it.

My happiness back then was the town where we lived, but it didn't last long. I made a good friend named Alexia, but sadly things don't last long not even happiness. Yes, the day came and I had to say bye to my only friend.

My mom explained how we were going to attend a private school near our home. I liked the idea, but it still hurt that I was alone with no friends and no one who I can bond with, my sister had no problem with the idea; however. But then my sister yelled out at me…

"Oh you make me seriously you…are…..not …….my ….Sister I HATE YOU! And I never will consider you one!" My mom and dad were upset with my sister. He yelled at my sister to value me more and told her she is acting very selfish and to stop. Otherwise, she is grounded, by not using her money. My sister made a scene she cried and made a tantrum and her dramatic tears say it all. The rest of the flight was silent the only person who was talking was our pilot.

A few hours later, the plane then landed at the private area of the airport. My dad called the chauffer, and 20 minutes later he finally came. Then we all sat at the back of the limousine. Through the glass I stared at the sky it was full of glowing stars. I wondered how stars can be as unique as they shine in the sky at night.

Now the present I am going to attend private school. The day before mine and my sister's first day, my mom talked about how it was now ok to sort of expose our identities just as long as we be care full and not cause problems. My sister surprisingly agreed. So then my mom and dad went to their bed rooms, and me and my sister went our separate rooms and said good night to each other. ''Night sis" I said. "Yeah, yeah whatever good night' 'said my sister in an annoyed tone. So then I went to my room, closed the door, changed to my PJ's, and turned off the lights and went to sleep.

Then later at night I had a nightmare causing me to wake up very scared. I shivered and then I realized the time 1:09 AM. Then, as soon as I calmed down I felt a chill. "Probably because of the air conditioner," I thought, but then I saw a figure. It was a shadow, and it moved through the window into my bedroom. It then saw me and ran towards me. I shivered. I didn't scream because I would have woken up my parents and my sister. It sat in fount of me. The more I looked at the glowing golden eyes, the more I was calmer. Then it cuddled to a form of an animal like creature. The pointed ears, the long tail and the long legs. And the eyes are unique with mystery. I then tried to pet it, but I went to sleep instead. This is how I meet it.

"Hello it's me."

"Huh? What who are you?"

"It's me." "

Are you playing games? It's not funny who are you?"

"I am the mysterious one"

"Huh? Wait! Are you that creature that went to my room?"

"You could say that..."

"You're that spirit?"

"Well I am your shadow, but yes you could say that".

"Ok?"

"You still don't know me? Aileen..."

"What?! How do you know my name?"

"That I cannot say; otherwise, you won't see me again."

"Why would I want to see you?"

"Ah you are very naive and full of questions as expected."

"Looks like I read too many books, but I never recall reading a story that has you in it."

The shadow appeared in front of me and then it turned into the wolf I had seen earlier.

"I have been watching you ever since you came to this world for the first time. I came here to help you until you depart."

"Ok this is getting weird".

"Let's travel back in time shall we?"

"Whatever you say wise guy."

"Oh, this park looks pretty".

"Indeed a very great place".

"Look do you know who that is?"

"Huh? Who? Wait that's me?"

"Yes when you were a young one".

"And is that my sister?"

"Yes, you two loved each other and even looked after one another you girls were inseparable back in the days."

I woke up and it was 7:09 AM, and I quickly got ready. Then I just sat there in the dining room and waited. Meanwhile I saw my sister wearing her new expensive heels mom bought for her. My sister laughed out loud. I knew it was too good to be true thinking that my sister have changed.

Make Your Mark

Young Georgia Author 2020

Hidden Beauty

by

Vianey Vidana

Dalton High School

Hidden Beauty

Every day she wears a mask

Foundation, concealer, blush, and contour

In attempt to hide her insecurities

Just to see a better version of herself

She proceeds to use the burning metal

And strikes it to her hair

It then conceals her natural curls,

And exchanges them for straight strands of golden

Long sleeves only,

To disguise the crevices along her skin

Fearing of the spying eyes

That judge every time she passes by

Her mind starts twisting

So she tries to cry for help

But nothing emerges

Her voice cannot be heard

Emptiness is all she has,

For no one can comprehend her

One day she'll be departed

And leave her soul to wander

Make Your Mark

Young Georgia Author 2020

The Keys

by

Emmy Vong

Dalton High School

The Keys

The color of the keys are day and night
It ranges from the lowest to the highs
The notes are laid across from left to right
And often is the places that lies the eyes
The keys are smooth and polished like a shoe
Where fingers gently press onto the wood
A pretty melody is playing too
To also try and learn to play you should
A beginning is a good place to start
As time is flying, skills are newly learned
You will get the hang of music and art
Which will lead you to fair results you earned
So keep this instrument alive in time
To hear the beautiful sound worth a dime