

# The Stone Circle

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Yuto Goto

*Beneath the Surface*

McLennan Community College  
Journal of Literary and Visual Art

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# A Not-So-Classic Love Story

by Shyanne Needler

First Prize - Prose

---

I'm the most powerful super villain in the City of Starlight. No Superhero can defeat me...well, except one. Firebird. When I think about it, I laugh. Who would've thought the most powerful supervillain would fall in love with a second-rate hero? I tried to get over my feelings, but every time I see her suit that looks as if flames are exploding from her very essence, my stone cold heart starts to beat.

Right now, I'm getting arrested for the billionth time. Are cuffs even necessary? All I'm gonna do is escape. The cuffs are a nuisance for me, and the cops know what I'll do. I let out an exasperated sigh, and the cops do their thing. I look over my shoulder to Firebird, who is helping clean up our most recent battle. I watch that frizzy red hair bounce as she walks. Those jade eyes sweep towards me as I sit in the back of a cop car.

I remember the first time we ever fought, when her name was Hera instead of Firebird. It's just as clear to me as that café window I destroyed with a fire hydrant. Hmm. I don't think I hit anyone that time. Lucky them.

I was a terror; destroying buildings, collapsing bridges, hospitalizing heroes. I don't even remember why I was mad. Oh wait, now I remember. I wasn't mad. I was...bored.

A powerful team of heroes, the Olympians, was sent after me. I heard the news from a police scanner I had stolen. I admit that I knew that I would be taken in when they defeated me. The Olympians are too strong, even for me, at least if I'm alone. I fled as fast as I could, and they drove me deeper into the towering city.

I flew past a hotel, so close that the windows shattered. Hera was hot on my tail. I was sure the new recruit of the Olympians would catch me. I heard a scream of pure terror. I turned to look over my shoulder, without stopping my flight, to see that a little girl had fallen out of a broken window. It was a twenty-story drop to rock-hard concrete. Then I saw that Hera wasn't there.

The screaming stopped, and I hovered so many feet in the air. My eyes darted back and forth, searching for that little girl. What I saw changed my life, and I still can't explain why. Hera caught the girl in midair. She chose to save an innocent life rather than get the villain. I know many heroes who would opt to get the villain rather than save innocent lives. I watched as Hera carried the girl back to the window and handed her over to her sobbing mother. Hera saved them both from an agonizing death.

I watched for a second longer before the rest of the Olympians came around

the corner. I high-tailed it out of there before they could catch up to me. I escaped, obviously, since I'm here now instead of in the Super-Max. What Hera did stuck with me. No matter how hard I tried to shake it, it wouldn't leave my hectic mind.

The police car heads to the station. I wait until we pass a laundromat to escape. Unlocking my cuffs and the car door, I open the door while it's still moving and jump out before the officers react.

Lucky me, there's a thick mist in the air, concealing my movements and whereabouts. My escape is always easy, especially from the cops on my payroll. I fly to the laundromat and enter, scanning the place. Seeing no patrons, I continue but then stop to look out into the mist, so thick I can't see the building across the street. Something was off, but I couldn't place it. With a shrug, I walked to the back to the small bathroom that not many know is there.

My bag is still stuffed in the corner of the cabinet. I open it and take out my civilian clothes: my favorite Slipknot hoodie and some black cargo pants. I place my suit and mask into the bag, zipping it up. I sling it over my shoulder and walk out of the quaint laundromat. I don't worry about cameras because there aren't any.

I go on foot to my destination, running my fingers through my short, wavy hair. Most mistake it for brunette, but it's actually a very dirty blonde. I try to dislodge the dirt stuck in it. I'm definitely taking a shower when I get home.

My destination is blocked off by police caution tape. It takes me a few minutes to actually get to it. When I get there, I sigh. The street is destroyed from the recent battle between my alter ego, The Wraith, and Firebird. I look from the street to the crowd of police and find Firebird answering the usual questions and debriefing them about what happened. I wait at the edge of the crowd of onlookers who probably have somewhere better to be. I flip the hood of my black hoodie over my head. Uncomfortable with all the police around, I stuff my hands into the pockets and tap my foot. I may be a bit impatient, too.

After several more minutes, most of the onlookers have left and Firebird finally is done with the police. She scans the crowd, looking for someone. When she finds that person, she practically glows with happiness. Firebird prances over to the caution tape and stops right in front of me. Holding her hand out to me with a smile, I took it without hesitation, unaffected by the gasps of fans around me.

"I didn't mean to tear up the road, Keren," I say, and her smile is contagious. I smile too. "I was trying to make it look legit," I say the last part quietly, not wanting anyone to hear.

"Clio," Firebird, AKA Keren Stern, says in a soft voice, "I'm not mad."

She pulls off my hood and leans over the caution tape to kiss me. I return the gesture.

Yes, that's right Firebird is dating me, Cliona Kaelgore, and is publicly an enemy to my alter ego, The Wraith. A secret we've managed to keep these past three years. It only took a year to woo her into a date, otherwise it would be four years but like...whatever, I'm happy.

This may not be the easiest relationship I've ever had, but it's the first one worth fighting for. She is worth fighting for. I'd burn the world for this Firebird, and she'd pull me out of the ashes.

# Oklahoma

by K.P. Patterson

First Prize - Poetry

---

Cigarettes and the smell of grease,  
Hot summer days spent by the creek,  
Honeysuckle garden beneath the pecan tree,  
Childhood innocence in full swing.

I wish someone had told me,  
that summer turns to fall,  
that time is never-ending and never slows at all,  
to listen to the wind, and the songs the blue jay sings,  
to cherish every moment, and the joy that each one brings.



Blake Beaman

*The Deer*

# Stranded

by Carolina McNeill

Second Prize (Tie) - Poetry

---

Stranded, hurt, paranoid, *alone*.  
Stuck in endless space with only two ways out - a pod or death.

He's like an alien to me, *humanoid*,  
Like a parasite invading our ship.

Just floating on by through the galaxy until we're found.  
What does my future hold?

May it take mercy on me,  
May *he* take mercy on me.



Kallie Jackson

*Fenced*



# His Return

by Amara Burghard

Second Prize (Tie) - Poetry

---

Shadows stretch far  
on sun-scorched earth.  
I stand; in my hands, my heart  
gazing on the land of my birth.

My journey was long.  
Now, I am home.  
What I once knew is gone,  
and I still stand alone.

Forever a solivagant,  
arrogant,  
with pitiful extravagance.



Kayla Rambeau

Cherry Blossoms



Maggie Wright

*Rubber Duck*



Anally Correa

Love

# Shooting Star

by K.P. Patterson

I was particles floating in vast, endless nothingness.  
The world below, full of hate and sin.  
Yet I felt this blissful ignorance.

You were a shooting star falling straight into  
the place I vowed never to go: existence.  
A star that beautiful could inspire anyone,  
So I fell to earth, too.  
You were something I could never obtain, never hold.  
A ball of fire that would only burn me if I got too close.  
The warmth of that fire drew me in.  
I was ash on the ground,  
You were still that beautiful burning star.  
Why would you want me?



Brianna Salyer  
Second Prize - Visual Art

*Forgotten Train*



Kallie Jackson  
Third Prize - Visual Art

*Dappled Green*

# The Wendigo

by Amara Burghard

The pain threatens me,  
But I won't breathe.  
I refuse to make a sound  
With the shadows all around.

I hear that wail,  
The scream-screech.  
The air turns stale;  
I dare not speak.

It is near.  
I almost vomit out of fear.  
The demon, foul and rank.  
Now I'm outflanked.

The ice runs down my spine.  
Its gaunt body with bones protruding,  
Jagged yellow teeth and sunken glow-red eyes.  
There is no more eluding.

It's here.  
With antlers like a deer,  
Instead it's the hunter  
With insatiable hunger.

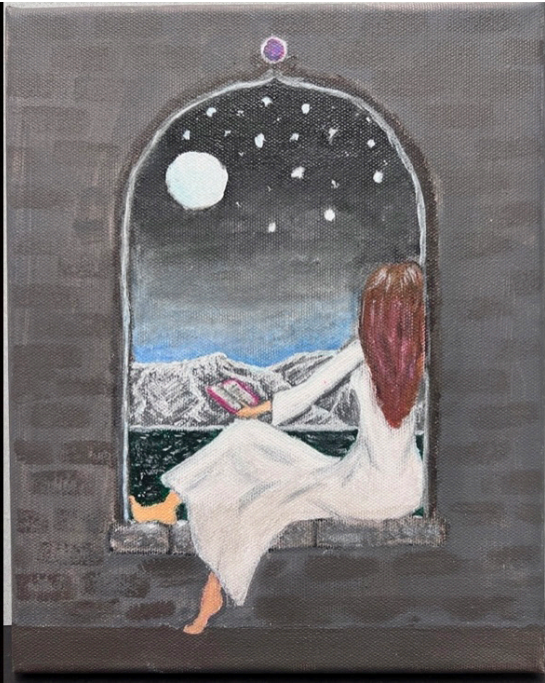
Viciously, I will be  
Devoured by this thing.

The thing they called a *Wendigo*.





Amara Burghard



*Window Girl*



Kasidy Stewart

*Dance of Fire and Water*



Daniel Puente

*Nature*

# Blonde

by K.P. Patterson

Blonde-haired boy,  
You will never remember me.  
I was never important to you,  
But I got lost in your smile.  
I was so intrigued by your mind.  
I wanted so badly to know you.  
You kept me out.  
You will never remember me.  
We never fell in love.  
But I wanted to trust you.  
I wanted things to work.  
You said my heart was good.  
I thought you saw the good in me,  
But loving me is exhausting.  
I'm sorry if I'm too much.  
Beautiful-blond-haired boy,  
I knew I could never be what you needed,  
But I got lost in what could've been.  
I fell in love with your soul.  
You said you cared.  
Did you lie?  
Did you care, but I ruined it?  
Beautiful-but-emotionally-distant boy,  
You felt like home,  
But home never felt safe.  
Home felt like haunted mirrors and ghosts hiding in shadows.  
You felt like home.  
Beautiful-but-complicated boy,  
You said you didn't plan to hurt me,  
But did you ever plan to stay?  
Did the demons that haunt my head scare you, too?  
Did they whisper my secrets?  
Beautiful boy with blonde hair,  
I fell in love with the idea of you,  
But you'll never remember my name.



Dawn Smith

*Abstract of a Dream*



Yuto Goto

*Golden Hour*

# Midnight

by K.P. Patterson

The way you look at me puts me in a trance.  
I forget where I am, and all there is is you.

Late night drive,  
Kiss me at the red light.  
Hold my hand all the way there.

In this moment, I feel absolutely free.  
Free from the ropes that tethered me to him.  
Free from the expectations everyone has placed.  
In this moment all there is, is you.

I want to tell you so many things.  
Like how I'm starting to fall for you.  
Like how I wish we could be more than what we are.

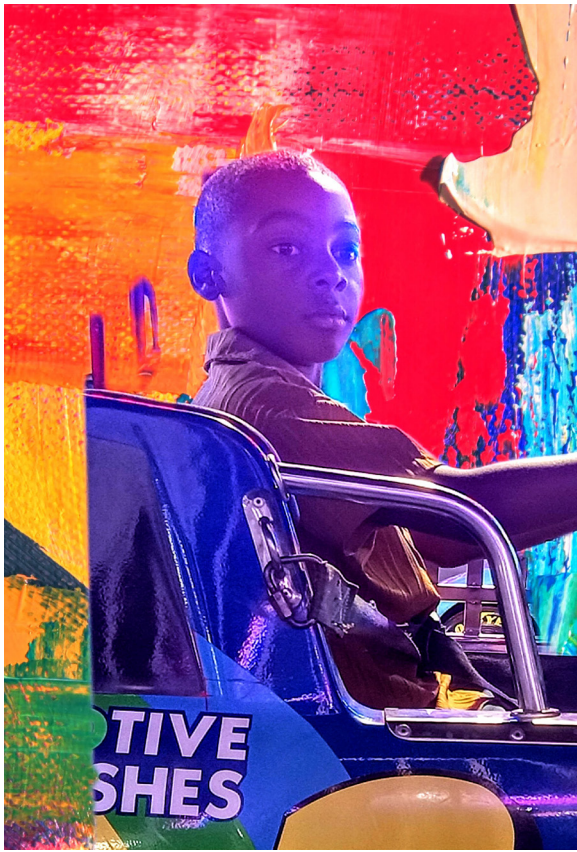
Those late night drives, you looking at the stars,  
pointing out my favorite constellation.  
You make me forget my name.

I wish you cared what I thought.  
I want with every part of me for you to stay.  
but all I am is a moment,  
and this moment to you means something completely different.



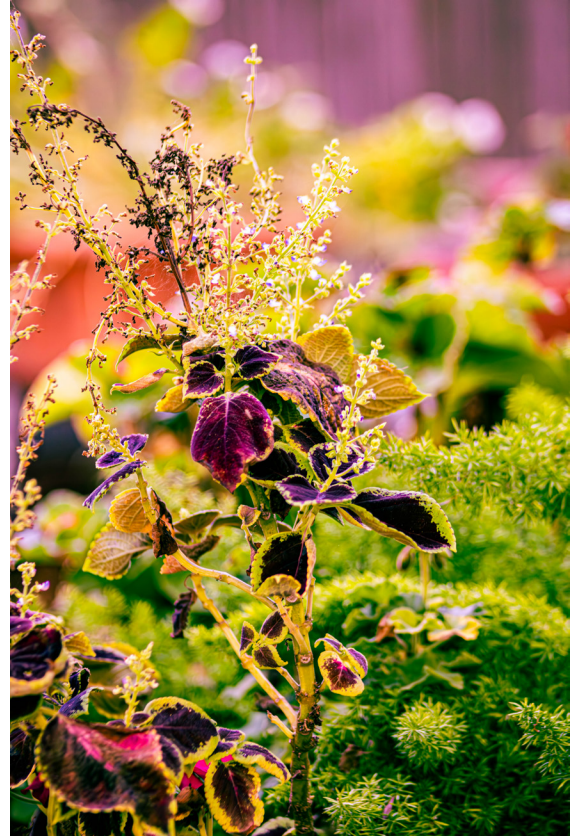
Brianna Salyer

*Pop of Color*



Valencia Jones

*The Ride*



Blake Beaman

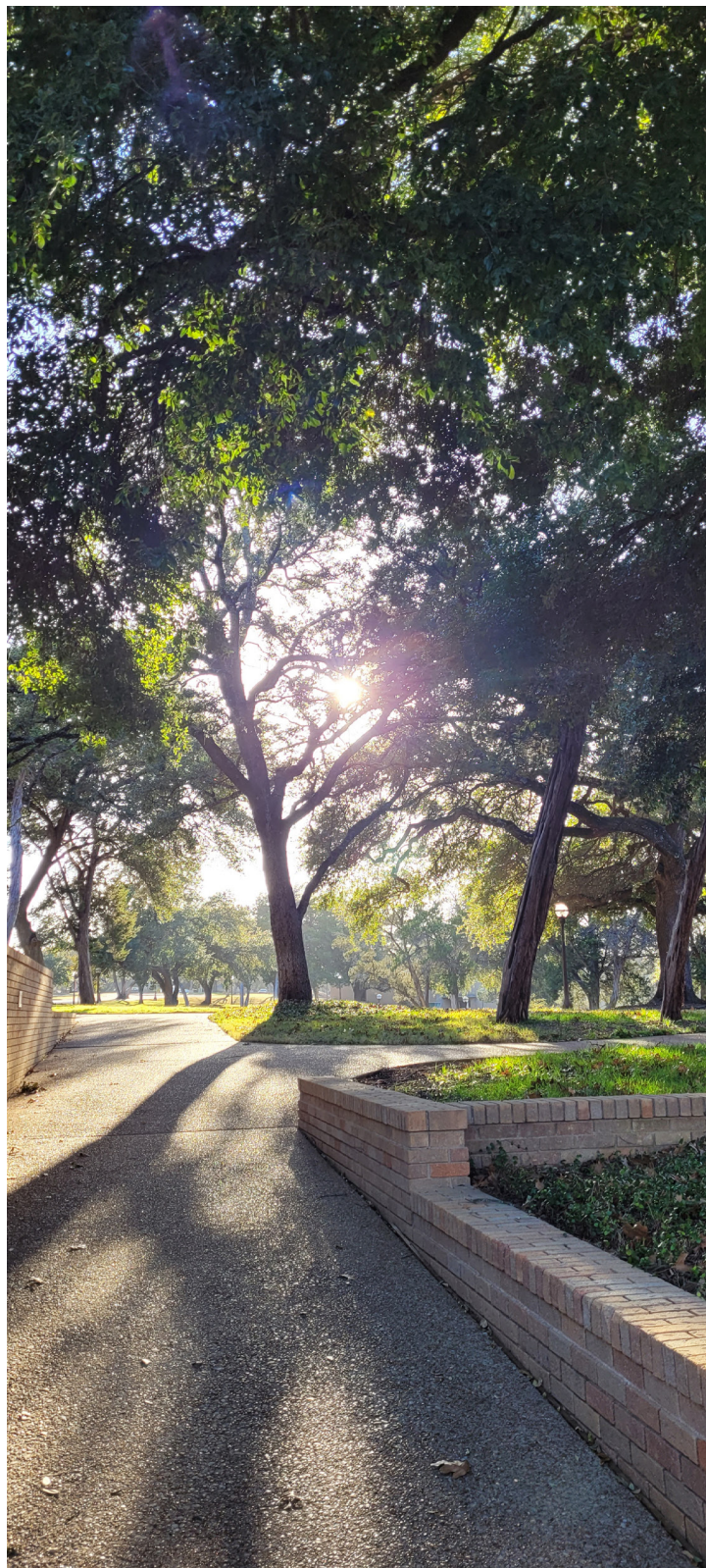
*Flower 2*



K.P. Patterson

*Summer Nights*





Emma Hawkins

*Through the Branches*



Brianna Salyer

*Before the Storm*

# The Genie

by Ximena Callejas

A lot of wishes, but none granted.  
A lot of pain, but no relief.  
A lot of sad, not happy.  
A lot of problems without solutions

I wish the people of the world wouldn't hate each other.  
I wish climate change didn't exist.  
I wish I didn't have trauma, depression, and anxiety.  
I wish we loved each other and the Earth.  
Too many wishes  
Not granted.

What is being human?  
A body with two arms and legs.  
A thing that lives on five continents.  
A thing that hopefully has a house, money, a car, and happiness.  
A thing everybody wants to be.

What I want is a life of freedom, without bonds.  
I want financial stability.  
I want a roof over my head.  
I want a job that pays well and that I like.  
I want to help the human race.  
I wish to be human and free.



Daniel Puente

Sunrise



Blake Beaman

Flower



Brianna Salyer

*Sunflower Sunset*

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Kallie Jackson

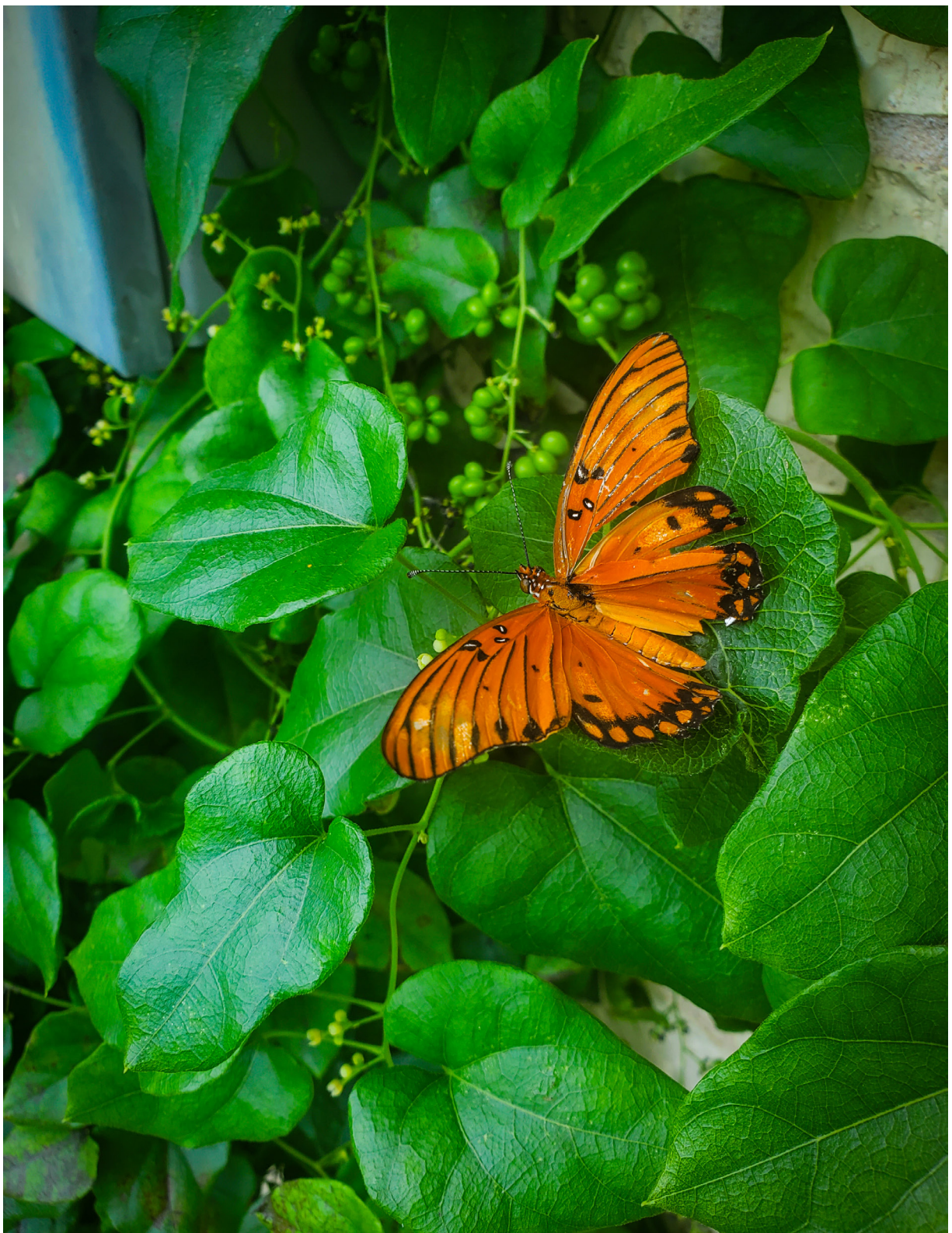
*Chained*



Dawn Smith

*The Beauty of Many Faces*

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Brianna Salyer

Nature