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Blue

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Blue

Sydney Rose Quintana

1st Place

syn·es·the·sia

ˌsɪnəsˈTHĒZHə/

noun: **synaesthesia**

1. the production of a sense impression relating to one sense or part of the body by stimulation of another sense or part of the body
-

My name was the first rainbow that I could actually touch; I would spend hours creating and caressing the colors with my number two pencil. I could never recall the names of the letters, but I remembered the slight, feminine curve of the light orange, the sharp, angular slopes of the dark purple... writing was like painting. It was like art only I could see the beauty in, and only my mama believed me. Mama never told me that my brain had its wires crossed or that I saw the world wrong. She would just spell out a new word for me on the chalkboard every morning and ask me how the rainbow looked today.

It wasn't until I was about five that I realized something was different about me. Before the strange looks at school started, I thought everybody saw the world the way that I did. Every letter and every number was a color, and it was these colors that made the words, the sounds, and the stories.

I used to imagine the colors blending together like drops of paint on a palette and each word was the art piece. Even the

sounds came alive, setting off explosions of color behind my eyelids, technicolor symphonies of shades and hues.

The sounds of violins were rotating swirls of purple and green, weaving together and apart. Trumpets were twin orange wavy lines flowing around and around my head like cartoon hearts. Drums were bumps of violet, each beat a new bang of color in my field of vision. An entire orchestra was colors and sounds spinning and twisting in tandem, pushing and pulling my focus in every direction. Music was always messy with color, and I loved every messy inch.

In a world of color, blue is my favorite. When my mama told me she loved me, it was the palest of the spectrum, a sea of soft, baby blue flooding my vision and wrapping around my small shoulders. That why it's my favorite of all the colors, on the pages and in my head.

It's no surprise. Her voice was almost always in shades of blue. When she spoke, it was cornflower clouds, soft and calming and patient. Her singing voice was more of a cerulean wave, bright and happy and slightly off-key. Even when she was mad at me, the sharp cobalt jabs were always enough to make me apologize. Mama didn't like it so much when I practiced writing my colors on the white walls. I told her that I didn't like white; it didn't sound like anything.

The moment that the car clashed against ours like cymbals, my mama's screams were red. Bright, ugly, violent red.

This red clouded my vision until nothing remained. Only red.

When I wake up two days later, the steady buzz of fluorescent lights and the white of the ceiling are blinding. As if somebody took away all of my senses and left fear in their place. I am drowning in the absence of color, the silence of my world choking me.

“What happened?” I ask aloud, voice shaking. The hum of the hospital begins to look as ghostly pale as the walls surrounding me. My vision floods with tears. Everything hurts, and a quick survey finds my arm in a cast. I feel the pain in my chest spreading all the way to the tips of my toes.

“You were in a car accident, honey. You were asleep for a while, but you’re going to be okay,” the nurse explains to me. In my growing alarm, her voice drips with hazardous swirls of orange and other colors I cannot name.

My vision starts to clear and before I can catch my breath, my bones begin to ache for the color *blue*. “Where’s my mama?”

I didn’t know that the sound of pity would be such a dark, stormy grey. “Your grandma will be back soon. She just stepped out to get some food.”

“Is my mama with her?” *Baby blue, cornflower, cerulean, even cobalt...*